Friday, September 24, 2010 ★★ Vol. 25 / No. 280

Don't bother to txt Noy; he left cell at home in RP

By TJ Burgonio

FORGOT YOUR cell phone at home? Can happen to anyone. But President Aquino?

Seems incredible but that was the explanation that one of Mr.

(NOT) A10

Aquino party feasts on hotdogs in NY street, pays $54

By Norman Bordadora

NEW YORK—It wasn't every day a head of state would meet with Henry Kissinger and then step out to eat at a hotdog stand, while Secret Service agents kept out, "Step aside, step aside."

In a jampacked schedule that included meetings with World Bank president Robert Zoellick, Kissinger, a former US Secretary of State; newspaper editors and the RP-US Business Council, President Aquino also took time to receive the Elizabeth Ann Seton Medal from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, a top US Catholic school in this city.

Twenty-four years ago, the college that conferred its highest honor on the mother bestowed the same recognition

AQUINO A11

P-Noy won't ax Puno yet

'Foes and friends are entitled to due process'

By Norman Bordadora

NEW YORK—President Aquino isn't about to accept the resignation of his good friend, Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno, who is accused of receiving up to P8 million a month from illegal gambling operators since July.

He is also one of those named to be culpable for the botched hostage rescue that left eight Hong Kong tourists dead.

Between meetings to lure fresh investments into the country, the President defended Puno who, he said, was already with him even when he was part of the opposition during the Arroyo administration.

"There is a process. If I run give the process to our foes, our friends and allies are also entitled to that process—that you can't have them hanged just because someone asked that you do so," Mr. Aquino said when asked if he would accept Puno's resignation.

Puno said on Wednesday in Manila that he would submit a courtesy resignation to spare the President any more embarrassment.

He said he could submit his letter of resignation after Mr. Aquino returned from his trip to the United States.

P-NOY A4

STREET SMART President Aquino opts for a hotdog for Wednesday lunch on the corner of Avenue of the Americas and 45th Street in New York City. The President recalls his family ate pizza and chow mein when they lived in Boston where his late father, former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., stayed while in exile in America. But the family feasted on hotdogs in New York.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Bishop defends Atong: He's into jai-alai, not 'jueteng'

By Christine V. Esguerra

RETIRED Archbishop Oscar Cruz yesterday said Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago might have been off the mark when she identified gambling consultant Charlie "Atong" Ang as the country's top "jueteng" lord.

But Cruz acknowledged that Santiago's list of jueteng operators and protectors she disclosed in her privilege speech on Wednesday was "more accurate and comprehensive" than the roster he submitted to the Senate.

BISHOP A16

Ex-Manila police chief: 'Biggest accountability'

By Nikko Dizon

THE INCIDENT Investigation and Review Committee (IIRC) has accused Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay of incompetence and disobedience and said that his actions at the critical moments caused the "debacle" during last month's bloody hostage drama.

A confidential portion of the IIRC report, a copy of which was made available to the public yesterday, said that Magtibay had the "biggest accountability" among 13 people blamed for the botched rescue.

President Aquino has withheld the committee's recommendations pending a review by Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa and Chief Presidential Legal Adviser Eduardo de Mesa. (See *full text of the committee's recommendations* on Page A4).

The committee recommended both administrative and criminal actions against Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim.

The IIRC headed by Justice

EX-MANILA A2

Kids express horrors in healing artworks

They eluded watery graves but are now 'living dead'

By Maricar Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

BIÑAN CITY—The San Juans are among 28 families who call themselves *buhay na patay* (living dead).

Forced to leave their houses in Barangays Malaban and Dela Paz here when Laguna de Bay spilled over in the wake of Tropical Storm "Ondoy" a year ago, the families have since been staying at a public cemetery in Barangay San Antonio.

The nightmare of the deluge recurs to this day when Sabrina San Juan could only huddle her four children on a bamboo cot and hope that her thatched shanty of wood scraps and plastic materials holds every time there is a downpour.

San Juan, 31, remembers how Typhoon "Basyang" destroyed their makeshift dwellings when it struck in July. "These had all fallen. We just rebuilt our homes. We do not know how long we will be like this every time a storm hits," she says.

THEY! A14

SMALL COMFORT A girl cradles a puppy as they evacuate their flooded home inside Provident Village in Marikina City on Sept. 27, 2009. Tropical Storm "Ondoy" let loose torrents of rain in just a few hours, causing massive flooding in Metro Manila.

IMITATION OF LIFE Tragedy in the eyes of a child. Mark Anthony Sanduvero, 11, a student at an elementary school in Pasig, depicts both his near-death and life-saving experiences during the floods close to Noah's Ark proportions.

By Kate Pedroso
Inquirer Research

DARK CLOUDS, heavy rain and waist-high floods.

The images are still dominant in the drawings of children a year after surviving the havoc that Tropical Storm "Ondoy" had wrought on their homes in Pasig City on Sept. 26 last year.

The artworks were produced by 28 pupils in Grades 5 and 6 during a debriefing activity that capped an Incentive Read-Along session held at Libertato Damian Elementary School in Pasig on Sept. 11.

Psychologists Quaxmie Cezar and Rizaneen G. T. Ng from the MLAC Institute for Children and Families, a foundation that aims to help disadvantaged and traumatized children and their families, facilitated the debriefing.

Ng introduced the drawing session after the back-to-back storytelling. Teachers from Sophia School read Rene O. Villanueva's "Si Carancal Labas sa Hangin," while Bianca Gonzalez, Unicef Philippines child rights supporter, read "Bitoy and the Big Flood" by Inquirer columnist Cerge Dayo.

"Bitoy and the Big Flood" follows the experience of Bitoy and

KIDS! A14

Palace review of report dismays De Lima, says IIRC put on defensive

By Philip C. Tubeza

JUSTICE Secretary Leila de Lima thinking of resigning?

De Lima yesterday said that she was "a little bit" surprised that President Aquino had ordered a Palace team to go over the findings and recommendations of the Incident and Investigation Review Committee (IIRC), which he himself formed, on the Aug. 23 hostage-taking.

PALACE A21

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WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: A strip of high pressure area is extending across Luzon. The whole country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Legaspi	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Virac	Partly Cloudy	Cotabato	Partly Cloudy
Catarman	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga del Sur	Partly Cloudy
Kalibo	Partly Cloudy	Dipolog	Partly Cloudy

Second FRONTPAGE

Virginia Reid, Inquirer Research

E-mail: p_news@inquirer.com.ph

6/42 LUZ-VIS-MIN

2nd	21 24
3rd	26 3
4th	12 36

SUERTRES

2PM	7 6 0
5PM	8 4 2
9PM	1 7 5

SIX DIGIT (Jackpot)

8 5 9 4 3 0

6/42 LUZ-VIS-MIN

6 8 12 13 17 36

PS,123,243.80

SUPER LOTTO 6/49

10 24 27 28 40 46

PS4,113,691.60

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Noynoy to abolish 10 offices

Palace says move will save ₱304M a year

By TJ Burgonio

TO CUT COSTS, President Aquino is moving to abolish 10 agencies that contributed to a bloated bureaucracy under the watch of his predecessor, former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The abolition of the agencies, including the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) and the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PASG), would save the government some P304.52 million a year, Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr. said yesterday.

"We are abolishing 10 of the 17 locally funded projects, which are no longer relevant or which are duplicative of the functions of the other projects," he said in a budget hearing of the House appropriations committee.

Priority programs

The amount would then go to priority programs and projects of the Office of the President in 2011, he added.

The other agencies sought to be abolished are the Mindanao Development Council, the Office of the North Luzon Quadrangle Area, the Office of Balweod Affairs, the Minerals Development Council, the Luzon Urban Beltway Super Region, the Bicol River Basin Watershed Management Project, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Global Warming and Climate Change, and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace Development Centers.

Ochoa did not say what will happen to the personnel of the agencies that would be abolished.

The OP is recreating the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace Process, Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission, Presidential Mining Bureau Agreements Commission, Commission on Information and Communications Technology, Echo Hospital Patient Commission, Commission on Maritime Affairs, Philippine Trade Commission, and Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office.

Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez, vice chair in the President of the Climate Change Commission, clarified that the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Global Warming and Climate Change was already absorbed by the newly created Climate Change Commission.

Republic Act 9729 or the Climate Change Act of 2009 which created the Climate Change Commission also provided that the powers and functions of the presidential adviser's office would be absorbed by the new commission, Alvarez said in a statement in the Filipino.

Ochoa presented the OP's proposed P4.079-billion 2011 budget, which was 4.2 percent lower than its P4.256-billion budget for 2010.

Lawmakers, however, spent more time grilling Ochoa on the report of the Isabela investigation and Review Committee on the August 23 hostage crisis, virtually turning the budget hearing into an inquiry on the crisis which left eight Hong Kong tourists dead.

Hostage inquiry

Minority Leader Edcel Lagman and Zambales Rep. Mitzigmar Magsaysay grilled Ochoa on the report's disclosure in the Chinese government ahead of the Philippine probe.

Ochoa maintained that it was Mr. Aquino's decision not to publicize the recommendations until he had read the report in full. Citing a Joint Circular creating the IIRC and spelling its mandate, he said that the report should be given "only to the President."

He admitted that Mr. Aquino referred the report to him and the chief presidential legal counsel for "assistance in understanding the full content of the report."

The questioning on the IIRC report took so much time that at one point Cagayan de Oro Rep. Pedro Rodriguez remarked: "This has become a hostage crisis inquiry." He then proceeded to ask questions on the OP budget.

IPHONE 4 IS HERE
Ernest Cu, president and chief executive officer of Globe, shows the media the first batch of iPhone 4 smartphones to arrive in the Philippines. The iPhone 4 will be commercially available to the local market starting today, exclusively from Globe. Prior online registrants will be among the first to get the hot new phones. A Globe press conference for dealers and customers to share online registrants is slated on Sunday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Rizal Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La and the Grand Ballroom of New World Hotel in Makati. ALEXIS ROMERO

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No 'pork' in ₱90.9-B DPWH budget–Singson

By Michael Lim Ubac

NOT A SHADOW of the much-derided pork barrel shows up in the ₱90.935-billion proposed budget for 2011 of the outspoken prexy Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

The pork-barrel freak of senators and congressmen, euphemistically called the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF), will not feature in his department, Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson told the House committee on appropriations at a budget hearing on Wednesday.

The PDAF is now lodged in the budget of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Singson said in his budget presentation for the DPWH.

Abad's power

This now setup effectively gives Budget Secretary Florencio Abad power over the release of the pork barrel to congressmen and senators, quite dominant in his Malacañang.

The DPWH used to administer the "hard component" of the PDAF amounting to ₱40 million for each House member, including party-list representatives, and ₱100 million for each senator.

The remainder of the PDAF or the "soft" component, goes to health, educational and other social services that senators and congressmen foresee on their constituents or choose beneficiaries.

Regardless of whether he or she represents a congressional district or a so-called "marginalized" sector, each House member receives ₱70 million in pork barrel funds each year, while a senator gets ₱200 million.

Abad yesterday confirmed that the pork barrel allocation was now an item under the DBM's budget.

He said that President Aquino had opted to retain the pork barrel, amounting to ₱70.028 billion, in the 2011 national budget.

In his budget presentation, Singson vowed to upgrade all national roads to "high quality" and global "safety standards" by the time Mr. Aquino steps down in 2016.

He admitted that the country's bad roads have contributed to road accidents and hampered development in the countryside.

He said the Philippines had the lowest ratio of paved road and paved road density compared with its Asian neighbors.

Only 16 percent of national roads are paved, which belongs the country close to the level of Cambodia and Vietnam, he said.

Benchmark

Singson said the DPWH under his stewardship would "benchmark" its road building activity on Malaysia, saying that Malaysian public infrastructure like roads and bridges helped generate in 2005 about 21 million tourist arrivals compared with the Philippines' three million tourists per year.

He said he wanted good roads to lessen road accidents.

Singson said there was a huge backlog of projects for road right of way, the reason for the unfinished or stalled highway construction projects like the C-5 portion traversing Quezon City, and he enjoined land commissioners to act on these areas.

Under questioning, Singson admitted that there was an unequal distribution of the public works budget across the country, alotting more money to Luzon than Visayas and Mindanao.

Bayan Muna party-list member Teddy Casiño asked about the ₱1.875-billion worth of alleged "double appropriations" for various road projects in the 2010 budget.

Commission on Audit Chairman Ma. Gracia Cabral explained that the 2010 budget did not categorize stations or sections of roads, but just named the roads being repaired, upgraded, or constructed.

Singson said it was very possible that the figures can be allowed, but that this would no longer be tolerated.

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IN THE KNOW: IIRC recommends the following actions

IN LIGHT of the preceding discussions on the accountability of the above-enumerated public officials, PNP officers and private individuals tasked on their corresponding acts and omissions during the Aug. 23, 2010, Rizal Park hostage-taking crisis, the committee hereby recommends the following actions:

1. Against PCSUPT (General) Rodolfo Y. Magtibay, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended based on the following grounds:

a. Serious incompetence in the Performance of Duties — for countermanding the order of his superior officer, Police Director (General) Leocadio Santiago Jr. to use the PNP SAF-CIDG in the assault of the bus and to direct the assault of his own group and in direct opposition to the clear and categorical order of the President to do so as relayed through said superior officer.

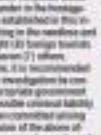
b. Gross incompetence — for manifest lack of adequate ability and fitness to satisfactorily perform his police duties as a general commander in the hostage-taking incident as established in this investigation, resulting in the needless and tragic death of eight (8) foreign tourists and the injury of seven (7) others.

At the same time, it is recommended that a preliminary investigation be conducted by the appropriate government agency for any possible criminal liability that may have been committed arising from the commission of the above offenses and in the course of execution of his command during the hostage crisis.

2. Against Police Director Leocadio Santiago Jr., the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended for Less Serious Neglect of Duty on the following grounds:

a. For his failure to issue timely and appropriate orders from higher authority when he failed to implement the order of the President to use the PNP SAF-CIDG in the assault of the hostage bus, and for his failure to monitor the crisis situation at the MOMCC as provided in the DMC Manual and its Annexes, which subsequently led to chaotic and confused situations and to delayed decision actions as may have been needed, but instead proceeding to Cagayan de Oro in the middle of the hostage crisis.

MAGTIBAY


SANTIAGO

b. For his failure to issue timely and appropriate orders from higher authority when he failed to implement the order of the President to use the PNP SAF-CIDG in the assault of the hostage bus and to direct the assault of his own group and in direct opposition to the clear and categorical order of the President to do so as relayed through said superior officer.

c. Gross incompetence — for manifest lack of adequate ability and fitness to satisfactorily perform his police duties as a general commander in the hostage-taking incident as established in this investigation, resulting in the needless and tragic death of eight (8) foreign tourists and the injury of seven (7) others.

At the same time, it is recommended that a preliminary investigation be conducted by the appropriate government agency for any possible criminal liability arising from the commission of the above offenses and in the course of the execution of his command during the hostage crisis.

3. Against Police Director General Jesus A. Verzosa, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended for Less Serious Neglect of Duty or Habitual Tardiness on the following grounds:

a. For his failure to implement the order of the President to use the PNP SAF-CIDG in the assault of the hostage bus and for his failure to monitor the crisis situation at the MOMCC as provided in the DMC Manual and its Annexes, which subsequently led to chaotic and confused situations and to delayed decision actions as may have been needed, but instead proceeding to Cagayan de Oro in the middle of the hostage crisis.

VERZOSA

At the same time, it is recommended that a preliminary investigation be conducted by the appropriate government agency for any possible criminal liability arising from the commission of the above offenses and in the course of the execution of his command during the hostage crisis.

4. Against Police Director Rodolfo T. Mendoza, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended for Less Serious Neglect of Duty or Habitual Tardiness on the following grounds:

a. For his failure to issue timely and appropriate orders from higher authority when he failed to implement the order of the President to use the PNP SAF-CIDG in the assault of the bus and to direct the assault of his own group and in direct opposition to the clear and categorical order of the President to do so as relayed through said superior officer.

b. For his failure to make immediate correction or take appropriate action when a deviation of duty has been committed in his presence by a subordinate under his command by failing to take immediate action to correct.

c. The commander of the Police Office of the Presidential Security Group (PSG) is responsible for maintaining a security perimeter around the President and his family and other VIPs and VVIPs. He is also responsible for the safety of the President's residence and other places where the President is scheduled to visit. He is also responsible for the safety of the President's family and other VIPs and VVIPs. He is also responsible for the safety of the President's residence and other places where the President is scheduled to visit.

PUNO

DOMINGUEZ

YEBRA

LIM

P-Noy won't ax Puno yet over graft allegations

From page A1

Puno said he first offered to resign when the Aquino administration drew criticism for the bungled Manila police hostage rescue on Aug. 23.

The Ateneo de Manila graduate said he told the President that "if I'm a burden to your administration, I am ready to leave."

Puno denied accusing pening patrols.

At the time ranked Archbishop Oscar Cruz, head of the Roman Catholic Church's Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan, also submitted to the bishops on Monday dictated that Puno and recently retired Philippine National Police chief Jesus Verzosa received his.

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago said in a privilege speech she not day that the justice secretary and the PNP chief were each receiving P150 million in penalty, representing 1 percent of the P30 billion in criminal gross receipts of jueteng operations.

In New York, however, the President indicated that it was unfair for someone to lose his job over allegations that still lacked sufficient evidence.

Loyalists deserve support

"One thing we have to watch out for is if these people who have been with us when we were still in the honoured opposition and who joined us in our struggles... if all these people who are close to [us] get tormented and ruptured, by these who are not so close, the next group could already be our enemies," Mr. Aquino said.

The President said those loyalists deserved his support.

"If I expect loyalty from them, I also have loyalty to them that I will give them due process, so that we will not be savaged by allegations and suspicions that are without basis," he added.

The President said he had directed the initiation of investigation of the allegations that Puno received kickbacks received millions of pesos in exchange for protecting jueteng operators.

Asked what sort of evidence would convince him of his friend's culpability, Mr. Aquino said, "I don't have to be convinced."

"They gave me a load. Thank you. It's nice the opposition to go over the load. But if I would've said everything that will be locked into, it's like I already told those involved to turn this and hide that because these are what we are looking for," the President said.

"The bit on how it up to them how it can be embarrassed that people are culpable or not culpable," he added.

Tawbay Cajaegos

The President said he had an duty of confirming whether his second cousin, Antonio "Tawbay" Cajaegos, had asked Cruz to downplay his allegations that key officials of the Aquino administration were receiving jueteng payola.

Mr Aquino said the prelate didn't want to talk to him even after he had asked him for a dialog. The President said he had then had a chance to talk to Cajaegos about the matter.

Cajaegos is the top contributor to Mr. Aquino's successful presidential campaign earlier this year, giving P3.06 million, a fourth of the total contributions that Aquino declared.

Cruz said Cajaegos approached him to ask that he go easy on the Aquino administration in connection with his exposé on the multimillion-peso payoffs to government officials in exchange for tolerating and protecting the operations of the illegal numbers racket.

The President was already in the Philippine Consulate in Los Angeles against his cousin cropped up.

Opinionated

"What's done is that we don't have to involve him in jueteng," the President told reporters between his meetings here with business leaders to attract investments to the country.

Cruz doesn't like that much, Mr. Aquino said.

"Archbishop Cruz is a very opinionated person. I think I came out publicly asking him to shelve it. He wanted to, and I think he expressed 'he didn't want to,'" the President said.

Mr. Aquino suggested that instead of people Cruz's pronouncements about him from the campaign period, "You will see that [Archbishop Cruz] has established in his opinion is that he does not drink highly of me. So, that's OK with me," he said.

In Manila, Malacañang ruled out any change in its plan to stamp out jueteng in the country as it gave assurance that legitimate operations on how the illegal numbers racket was flaring in the country would not prosper under the Aquino administration.

Reminding that Mr. Aquino had ordered Local Government Secretary Jesse Robredo to make a comprehensive plan on how to eradicate jueteng, presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said the administration was determined to do the job.

"Now if the legislature believes that there should be a bill to put any reward jueteng then it's up to them to propose laws legalizing jueteng. But insofar as the executive is concerned, our duty is clear. Jueteng is illegal and therefore our duty is to eradicate jueteng," Lacierda told reporters.

Legalization debate

Lacierda was reacting to Santiago's call for the administration to either legalize jueteng or make sure it fails the problem.

Vice President Jejomar Binay said he was open to having Congress legalize what he called "an jueteng should be legalized.

Speaking to reporters after presiding over audit-taking sites in Mabalacat, Binay said it was "probably high time to review the position of the government in light of what has transpired." With a report from Christine O. Avendaño

Ex-Manila police chief has 'biggest accountability,' is 'incompetent'

From page A1

secretary Leila de Lima came up with a harshly worded, critical discussion of the accountabilities of each of the 13 individuals it had recommended for either criminal or administrative charges.

The commission described Magtibay as an "incompetent commander, organizer, and manager," who was "grossly and recklessly insubordinate at times" in the incident.

Magtibay served as the ground commander during the Aug. 23 standoff in which eight Hong Kong tourists and the hostage-taker, disgruntled former police Insp. Rolando Mendoza, who was also striking the terminal of extortion and robbery charges against him, were killed.

Yebra is accused of the police Manila on the hostage debacle upon him, if not for the equally incomprehensible inaction and recklessness committed by both his superiors and those on to execute lawful orders from higher authority when he failed to implement the order of the President to use the PNP SAF-CIDG in the assault of the bus and to direct the assault of his own group and in direct opposition to the clear and categorical order of the President to do so as relayed through said superior officer.

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a. For his failure to implement the order of the President to use the PNP SAF-CIDG in the assault of the hostage bus and for his failure to monitor the crisis situation at the MOMCC as provided in the DMC Manual and its Annexes, which subsequently led to chaotic and confused situations and to delayed decision actions as may have been needed, but instead proceeding to Cagayan de Oro in the middle of the hostage crisis.

At the same time, it is recommended that a preliminary investigation be conducted by the appropriate government agency for any possible criminal liability arising from the commission of the above offenses and in the course of the execution of his command during the hostage crisis.

6. Against Undersecretary Rafael Pazo, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended for gross negligence under the agency policies and service laws, rules and regulations for neglecting to disseminate and ensure the implementation of the order of the President to utilize the PNP SAF-CIDG in the assault of the hostage bus and for his failure to exercise due diligence in supervisory powers over the PNP as ordered by the President.

At the same time, it is recommended that a preliminary investigation be conducted by the appropriate government agency for any possible criminal liability arising from the commission of the above offenses and in the course of the execution of his duties as DILG undersecretary during the hostage crisis and in assuming the position of the DILG Secretary as NPSC-CMC.

7. Against Major Alfredo S. Lim, the initiation of the corresponding administrative and criminal proceedings for assuming the authority of the senior commander in the operational action or intervention in consideration of Section 1.7.2 of the DMC Manual, for negligence in his failure to promptly respond to and coordinate the Crisis Management Committee in accordance with the CSBC Manual of 2009, for issuing an illegal order during the arrest of Senjero Mendoza, for abandoning post ordering the on-scene commander to abandon the Advanced Command Post at the height of the hostage crisis and, in general, for failure to perform his duties as DMC Chairman as demonstrated in the previous section constituting dereliction of duty and gross negligence, in accordance with Sec. 50 (c) of RA 7160.

8. Against Vice Mayor Francisco Domagoso, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings for negligence in not, by failure to properly exercise his duties and functions as Vice Chairman of the Crisis Management Committee and for dereliction of duty for abandoning the Advanced Command Post at the height of the hostage crisis, in accordance with Sec. 50 (c) of RA 7160.

7. Against PSUPT. Orlando Yebra, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended based on the grounds of gross incompetence, he manifest lack of adequate ability to exert fitness to satisfactorily perform his police duties as Chief of Police of the Manila Police District (MPD) and for neglect of duty for not establishing an incident management system established in this investigation, resulting in the needless and tragic death of eight (8) foreign tourists and the injury of seven (7) others.

At the same time, it is recommended that a preliminary investigation be conducted by the appropriate government agency for any possible criminal liability arising from the commission of the above offenses and in the course of the execution of his office as chief negotiator during the hostage crisis.

8. Against PSINSP. Santiago Pascual III, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended on the ground of gross incompetence, for manifest lack of adequate ability and fitness to satisfactorily perform his police duties as Over-all Assault Team Leader in the hostage-taking incident as established in this investigation, resulting in the prolonged agony of the surviving injured hostages for the reason that assault team arrived and succeeded in rescues, instead of on-hour.

At the same time, it is recommended that a preliminary investigation be conducted by the appropriate government agency for any possible criminal liability arising from the commission of the above offenses and in the course of the execution of his office as Over-all Assault Team Leader during the hostage crisis.

9. Against Tanodbayan (Ombudsman) Merceditas Gutierrez, the initiation of formal investigation to determine whether the violations established in the preceding section qualify as grounds for impeachment of the Ombudsman, in accordance with the discussions in the previous section.

10. Against Board Ombudsman Emilio A. Gonzalez III, for the conduct of the findings of this investigation on the Office of the President for further determination of possible administrative offenses as discussed in the previous section and for the initiation of the proper administrative proceedings.

11. Against Michael Rogas and Erwin Tulfo, the endorsement of the results of this investigation to the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) for the purpose of imposing sanctions for violating the Code of Ethics applicable to broadcast journalists and to include the Radio Broadcasters Inc. (DZBB) as parties in charge for directing the programs, for allowing the "interviews" with the hostage-taker to be undertaken and aired, endangering the lives of persons involved in the hostage-taking. It is further recommended that the Department of Justice initiate investigation to decide now any other culpability.

12. Against ABC 5, ABS-CBN, GMA 7, the endorsement of the results of this investigation to the KBP, or appropriate media "watchdog" organizations, for the possible violation of their code of ethics as the media broadcast the hostage-taking.

This is without prejudice to the findings to be arrived at in future proceedings as to the culpability of other officials and individuals.

- Nine killed in "not properly supervised" hostage-taker Mendoza's profile and failed to request for intelligence information when there was none provided to him.
- Pascual failed to exercise due diligence and competence of an assault commander.
- Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez and Deputy Ombudsman Emilio Gonzalez III "committed serious and inexcusable negligence and gross violations of their official duties" in the conduct of preceding which raises that a motion for recommendation to administrative disciplinary action should be resolved in five days, when Mendoza's case has dragged for nine months, and "deliberately delayed the resolution which "predisposed the dispenser error in hostage-taking."
- Broadcasters Michael Rogas, Erwin Tulfo, GMA, management and personnel violated their code of ethics and possibly the Revised Penal Code by broadcasting an interview with Mendoza.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Teachers to defy 'no weekend homework' order

By Tarra Quismundo

COMPLAINED over the Department of Education's (DepEd) latest order, a teachers' group yesterday said their members would continue to give students weekend homework they deem necessary, asserting their right to academic freedom.

The 30,000-strong Teachers' Dignity Coalition (TDC) also sought clarifications from Education Secretary Armin Luistro on whether his latest order—banning public school teachers from giving weekend homework—was for mere implementation or simply a piece of advice to the official had said Monday.

"This might be deliberate, but it's part of our academic freedom that...if we find it necessary, we will give assignments. We will still do it despite the order," TDC spokesperson Emmanuel Pelaerpio said yesterday.

The group had earlier criticized the necessity for issuing an "unnecessary" order, saying teachers were not to the business of giving homework just to burden students.

Assignments impart discipline among students and serve as a bonding activity for families, the TDC said.

Pelaerpio said the DepEd order, released last week without consultation with teachers, was confusing as its content seemed to contradict Luistro's pronouncements to the media.

The TDC will send a letter to the DepEd seeking an audience with Luistro to discuss the matter, she said.

"Our stand is firm. If there was consultation, we wouldn't need to discuss it ... But we want to clarify because it's confusing," Pelaerpio said.

Directed at bureau directors, regional and school division chiefs and all public elementary school heads, DepEd Memorandum No. 393 said in homework "shall be given during weekends for pupils to enjoy their childhood and spend quality time with their parents."

Pelaerpio noted that "shall" was a "strong enforced word" indicating a directive.

On Monday, Luistro said the memo was just advice to teachers and not meant to limit teachers' academic freedom.

"The issue has become bigger now and I think we should sit down and talk instead of talking only to the media," Orlicaryo said.

Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 21 ISSUE, the front-page banner story—"13 may face charges over hostage fiasco"—misstated the position that John Modesto holds at Radyo Ela Dalawampu (DMC). Modesto is the spokesperson—not the station manager—of DMC.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, September 22, 2010
25th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading Prv 20:10-15
Gospel Lk 6:1-5

Jesus called his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to drive out all evil spirits and to heal diseases. And he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He instructed them, "Don't take anything for the journey, neither walking stick, nor bag, nor bread, nor silver coins, and don't even take a spare coat. Wherever home you enter, remain there until you leave that place. And wherever they don't welcome you, leave the town and shake the dust from your feet as a sign of a testimony against them."

So they set out and went through the villages, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

Commentary

"Wherever you are not welcomed, leave that town and shake the dust off your feet..."

Jesus cannot be imposed on people.

Jesus can be excluded for cheers, however.

He can leave no matter how real an friendship.

He can leave to preach this Gospel one more week, but with our lives.

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DepEd seeks protection for students

By Tarra Quismundo

THE DEPARTMENT of Education (DepEd) has called on local governments and community leaders to help protect students from gang recruiting [illegible] amid reports that fraternity violence could be behind a student's death in the hands of her student in Caloocan City last week.

"DepEd seeking the active assistance the [illegible] and community leaders in keeping our school children from joining organizations that may put them in danger," the DepEd Communications Unit said yesterday.

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SG-1001

RP will meet millennium goals–Ona

THE PHILIPPINES will meet its Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Health Secretary Enrique Ona said on the opening of the Women Deliver Philippines Conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel last week.

"The most problematic provinces of the Millennium Development Goals... infant and neonatal mortality reduction (MDG4) and maternal mortality reduction (MDG5)...will be met by the Philippines despite statistics saying that the country will fall short[ened]," Ona said.

Time-bound

The MDGs are time-bound development goals set by governments of 189 member countries during the 2000 Millennium Declaration. These goals, globally accepted as the means to curb poverty, hunger and illiteracy, sanitation and health, will be realized in 2015.

The three-day Women Deliver Conference focused on MDG4 and MDG5 with hopes of finding ways to reduce their numbers. From 1990 to 2008, mortality of infants and children under five years old was significantly reduced by more than half and the Philippines is on track of meeting MDG 4 by 2015, Ona added.

However, all of the MDGs, the reduction of maternal mortality (MDG 5) by three-fourths and providing universal access to reproductive health care made the least progress in the Philippines.

In 1990, the maternal mortality rate of the Philippines was 209 deaths per 100,000 live births which translated to the target 52 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2015. However, statistics studies show that the maternal mortality rate of the country is still at 162 deaths per 100,000 which is still below the target figure, and there are only 5 years left. The country's maternal mortality rate is still one of the highest in Asia.

Marching orders

In his speech, Ambassador Mikael Mac Donald, head of the European Union delegation to the Philippines, said "[A]bout two-thirds of the 536,000 women who die each year giving birth and as this day ends, 11 women will have needlessly died and on this same day some 65 children will have become orphaned—robbed of the presence of all maternal deaths could have been averted, with proper care, and proper services."

"The whole Department of Health under the Universal Health Care Agenda of the Aquino government is under marching orders to provide universal access to reproductive health to meet the Millennium Development Goals," said Ona.

Ona said that in 2009, 400 infrastructures and medical facilities were upgraded nationwide, including in the ARMM region where the highest numbers of maternal and newborn deaths are registered.

Ona said that despite budget constraints, local agencies—particularly the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Education, National Commission on Indigenous People, Commission on Human Rights—are implementing development plans to address the encompassing issues related to MDG5.

EU's support

MacDonald said that EU's support to the Philippines has been focused on poverty reduction and improvement of the health status of the local population, in partnership with the DOH. Grants now total P2.7 billion on ongoing programs.

"Starting this year until 2013, another P4.7 billion will be granted by the European Union for health under five years old was significantly re-duced by more than half and the Philippines is on track of meeting MDG 4 by 2015, Ona added.

House taps SolGen for SC case on Merci impeachment

By Michael Lim Ubac

WHO WILL blink first?

The House of Representatives will appear during the oral arguments set by the Supreme Court on Sept. 30, a move which could prevent a head-on collision with the tribunal over the move to impeach Ombudsman Merceditas N. Gutierrez.

The House leadership has tapped the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) headed by Jose Anselmo Cadiz as its legal counsel in defend the lower chamber's power to go ahead with its impeachment proceedings.

With the solicitor general appearing before the high court, a defiant House committee on justice is slated to proceed with the scheduled hearings on Sept. 28.

Sought for comment, Ilocos Rep. Sonny Angara, a lawyer, said he was certain that the committee and House leadership had "weighed the consequences of their actions."

Backchanneling

"But, perhaps, some backchanneling between the court and the House should occur to see what common ground exists since they are coordinate branches of government," said Angara.

Speaking with reporters yesterday, Speaker Feliciano Belmonte said Senate Majorities, one of the legal consultants of the House, would also represent the chamber.

Belmonte and some members of the House leadership will attend the oral arguments but only as observers since the solicitor general will do all the talking.

"I think, principally, I have to show my face there. I wouldn't be surprised if others will also be there," he said.

Belmonte said that almost everyone in the House supported the position—enunciated on the floor of Congress by several congressmen last week—that the writs quo ante order issued by the Supreme Court encroached upon the prerogatives of Congress as a co-equal branch of government.

Status quo ante

In an unprecedented move on Sept. 14, the tribunal voted to issue a status quo ante order in response to Gutierrez's petition asking the high court to rule on whether the House panel violated the Constitution in forming two impeachment petitions this year.

The order calls for the committee on justice to suspend the impeachment proceedings against the Ombudsman.

Defiant legislators threatened to ignore the high court order and continue with the impeachment proceedings, alerting a warning from the retired administrator that they risked a contempt citation from the highest court.

In a separate interview, Iloilo Rep. Niel Tupas Jr., chair of the House justice committee, said the House reply to the Supreme Court order would be filed on Sept. 27.

Tupas reiterated that the reply, dubbed "comment," would include a reminder to the high tribunal that it was "infringing" on the powers of Congress.

"We will reiterate our constitutional mandate. We are submitting a comment, but are submitting ourselves to the jurisdiction [of the high court]," he said.

Shun plastic shopping bags on Wednesdays

By Kristine L. Alave

GOING SHOPPING on a Wednesday? Bring your own bag.

Noting that plastic bags account for the most of the trash collected in the country, Environment Secretary Raimundo Paje urged the public and supermarkets to eschew plastic bags in favor of reusable ones.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), along with the Earth Day Network, mall owners and supermarket chains yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding to promote reusable bags and reduce the use of plastic bags.

Under the agreement, mall and supermarket chains will not provide plastic bags to customers on Wednesday to thereby instill public consciousness in using reusable ones.

Reusable bags

"We say that it is imperative on our part to initiate an eco-friendly campaign to encourage the public to take part in saving the environment by taking up an alternative greening method, which is to bring and use reusable bags," said Emily Dee Newsweek, president Ilham Lozada.

EcoWaste Coalition, another environment group, also recently called on the government to ban the use of plastic bags.

The group noted that consumers could use alternatives to plastic bags such as buying and basket made of biodegradable plant materials. Old garments and cloth could also be made into bags, it suggested.

The signing of the agreement came two days before the first anniversary of typhoon Ondoy which flooded 80 percent of Metro Manila, killing hundreds of people and displacing tens of thousands more.

Lesson from Ondoy

Gilbuena said the damage wrought by "Ondoy" which brought the worst flooding to the city in decades, should prompt industry and consumers to reduce their wastes.

"Partnership is key. The DENR cannot solve the Philippines' solid waste management problem alone. We believe, and we know, that just as each of us is also a solution to the problem," Paje said.

He said most of the rubbish that collect in the country's shorelines and waterways are plastic trash.

According to DENR data, there were 736,000 kilograms of trash recovered from the country's shoreline and waterways. Of that number, 622,440 kg were composed of plastic and rubber items.

Above half of the plastic items discard into waterways—300.7 kilograms—were plastic bags, the DENR said. It was followed by food wrappers/containers at 130,800 kg.

"The unbelievably high number of plastic bags that Filipinos use is an alarming problem which mandates our inability to manage our wastes properly," the Earth Day Network said.

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Moratorium on GSIS housing loan payments ends this month

By Rainer W. Domingo

LOAN members by members of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) are to resume next month as the yearlong moratorium implemented in the wake of last year's devastating typhoons will end on Sept. 30.

Borrowers who availed of the payment moratorium on housing loans and the so-called consolidated loans (ConsoLoans) must resume paying their monthly amortizations to avoid being declared in default, the GSIS said yesterday.

The GSIS board approved a resolution for a one-year moratorium on loan payments last year to help the victims of the destructive typhoons "Ondoy" and "Pepeng."

The repayment deferral program covered only the amortizations for the period October 2009 to September 2010.

Also, the program qualified for full reprieve only housing loan and ConsoLoan borrowers whose accounts were not in default as of Sept. 30, 2009.

Borrowers with arrears were allowed to avail of the moratorium, except that in their case the typhoon covered the difference between the full 12 months and the number of months in arrears.

The GSIS also released in the wake of last year's typhoons P4.47 billion worth of emergency loans to affected members.

The 204,879 GSIS members who availed of the emergency loan each received P50,000, payable in three years in equal monthly installments with a yearly interest of 6 percent.

GSIS data showed that last year, 866,726 government employees and pensioners borrowed a total of P43.09 billion under the state-run pension fund's consolidated loan program.

The amount is 27 percent higher than the P34.7 billion disbursed in 2008 through the ConsoLoans programs, which tied five loan facilities into a single package to make their debts easier to manage.

Noynoy promotes 13 AFP generals

By Cynthia D. Balana

PRESIDENT Aquino has submitted the promotion of Army Chief Maj. Gen. Arturo Ortiz, a medal of valor awardee, to the rank of lieutenant general and 12 other senior officers from the three branches of the Armed Forces of the Philippines for confirmation of the Commission on Appointments.

In a letter to the commission dated July 24 but released only yesterday by the AFP, the President also recommended the confirmation of the promotion from Admiral Mario Catacutan, commander the AFP inspector general, to vice admiral.

Promoted to the rank of major general to be admiral were Brig. Gen. Benito Ballorin, head of the AFP Visayas and security commission; Brig. Gen. Rolito Abad, head of the AFP Office of the Internal Auditor; Commo. Jose Luis Mateo, chief of naval staff, Comms. Gerardo de la Cruz Jr., chief of personnel (J-1) ; Brig. Gen. Lucio Catalan, Air Force inspector general; and Brig. Gen. Francisco Cruz, chief of intelligence (J-2).

Given a star rank were Colonels Jorge de Jesus, commander for 903rd Supply Wing; Romeo Poquiz, assistant deputy chief of staff for logistics (J-4); and Edgardo Rosa Sumaoy of the Air Force internal audit.

Brig. Gen. Jose Mabanta congratulated the officers for their promotions.

"They have gone through the usual command and staff positions and they have gone through the process and more importantly a three-star ranks which were given to them together with these are responsibilities," Mabanta said.

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English blamed for poor literacy

By Terra Quintanilla

THE USE OF English as a medium of instruction even for source learners may be the reason why some nine million Filipinos aged 10 to 64 find it difficult to read, write, compute and comprehend, according to an education official.

The use of a secondary language in classroom instruction inhibits learning among young students, eventually leading to poor literacy skills when they become adults, said Education Undersecretary Yolanda Quijano.

"Maybe it's because our children are taught in English. They are trained to learn but because they don't have the facility of the language they cannot answer back what they think and what they're feeling," said Quijano, a 32-year veteran educator.

The 2008 Functional Literacy and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) of the National Statistics Office, released this month, found that one out of every 10 Filipinos is functionally illiterate, meaning they have difficulty with basic life skills like reading, writing, calculating and understanding.

The FLEMMS survey, the fourth nationwide literacy study since 1989, found that nine million, or some 13.4 percent of 67 million Filipinos, fell below the literacy group pegged on those practical skills.

Functional literacy

Graduates of high school and tertiary levels were considered functionally literate by the survey.

The survey placed the national functional literacy rate at 86.4 percent, higher than the 2003 figure of 84.2 percent.

Metro Manila registered the highest regionally with a 94 percent literacy rating while the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao rated lowest with a 71.4 percent.

The use of a foreign language at the early stage of formal schooling has been identified as among the factors why students drop out early.

A student who leaves school even at fourth grade risks reverting to illiteracy, Quijano warned.

"When a student drops out in Grade 4, it's possible that they revert to illiteracy, especially if they have no reading materials and lack learning stimulants in the home environment," she said.

The Department of Education has initiated a program using the mother tongue for instruction of entry-level students, in the wake of local and international studies that pupils taught in their first language showed better rates of learning and retention.

Deviating from the traditional use of English in Philippine schools, the program, called the "mother tongue-based multilingual education," advocates the use of regional languages in teaching early learners to build basic learning skills before teaching them secondary languages, including English and Filipino.

Mother tongue

"We use the mother tongue language in the way we think, the way we feel, but beginning Grade 4, we bridge what we have learned in the mother tongue and use those skills and competencies for oral fluency in Filipino and English," Quijano explained.

Studies have proven that the mother tongue provides a strong foundation for learning secondary languages, math and science skills, among others.

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'Hearts on Fire': Musical tribute to ICM Sisters

ALUMNAE OF St. Theresa's College will stage a musical on Oct. 9 to honor the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (ICM) on the congregation's 100th year. Titled "Hearts on Fire: 100 Years of Fire and Grace," the performance will highlight the three-day centennial celebration that will start on Oct. 8.

The musical will be held at 7 p.m. at the Star Theater in Pasay City.

"Hearts on Fire" will tell the story of the ICM through songs, dances, video footage and narration. Viewers will be walked through the sisters' journey that started on June 20, 1910, when Mother Leonie de Meester arrived in Tagudin, Ilocos Sur. It will feature the many facets of the sisters' mission here and overseas and their new challenge of multiculturalism.

The climax of the show will be a medley of songs by alumnified voices.

Participating in the musical will be alumnae of St. Theresa's College, among them pianist Ingrid Sala-Gonmenerio, prima ballerina Lisa Macuja-Elizalde and film director Laurice Guillen, as well as the sisters' partners in their various socio-pastoral programs—parish workers, factory workers, urban poor communities, farmers and fisherfolk.

The production team for the musical is spearheaded by alumnae of St. Theresa's College Quezon City. The Director is Ms. Stella Bailen-Alonzo. The production concept and design are by Regina Rhanda-Tabalunda. Musical Director is Agnes Manalo.

Tickets are available at St. Theresa's College, Quezon City (372-2824) and its offices.

A repeat performance will be held at STC, QC (26 Dunkirk, 116 D. Tuason Ave., Quezon City) on Oct. 10.

For more information, please contact Rose T. Diaz-Salvosa (CSC '82, Alumnae office at 740 8111- or email at rtsquezon@hotmail.com) and Tess Abellera of STC Manila Alumnae office at 340 1018 or stastmanila@yahoo.com

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, September 24, 2010
25th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ezr 9:5-9
Gospel: Lk 9:18-22

One day when Jesus was praying alone, and he from his disciples, he asked them, "What do people say about me?" And they answered, "Some say that you are John the Baptist; others say that you are Elijah, and still others say that you are one of the former prophets risen from the dead." Again Jesus asked them, "But who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "The Messiah of God." Then Jesus spoke to them, giving them strict orders not to tell this to anyone.

And he added, "The Son of Man must suffer many things. He will be rejected by the elders and chief priests and teachers of the law, and put to death. Then after three days he will be raised to life."

Commentary:

"But who do you say that I am?"

This is the question of Christianity for us all.

Who Jesus really is for us will determine how we live and what we do and, in the end, how happy we are as we gaze through life, as well.

Diocesan Communications Foundation, Inc., 4 Mercury St. (P. Tuazon Blvd.), Quezon City, 1109 Tel. & Fax: (632) 911-5172 to 73 e-mail: info@dcf.org.ph Website: http://www.dcf.org.ph/dailygospel.asp Author: Archbishop Oscar V. Cruz (Translation and notes by Fr. Pius Tan, SVD)

ABC Ref. No.: 5000003100

State schools still have ₱19B–Abad

By Reneed W. Dominguez

SEE UNIVERSITIES and colleges (SUCs) left with P19.1 billion in 2009 allocations — untouched despite the widely denounced dearth of funding for public tertiary education, Budget Secretary Florencio B. Abad said yesterday.

"(But) I, too, do not want subsidies for SUCs, our government is hard-pressed to fund other important needs such as basic education, healthcare and social security," Abad said.

"In the same vein, we discovered that SUCs are still holding on to P19.1 billion in cash balances since 2009," he added.

In 2009, allocation for SUCs were set at P23.9 billion, of which 92.99 billion was for capital outlay.

The budget chief explained that the Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997 authorized SUCs to retain and disburse their income, including subsidies received from the national government.

Cash advance

He said that on average, an SUC has a cash balance of P451.8 million, equivalent to 41.3 percent of their expenditures.

Abad called on students demanding for bigger funding for tertiary education to help ensure the "judicious use" of SUC funding.

However, Abad asked for students' understanding that with scarce public funds available, the government has to prioritize closing the resource gaps in basic education, among other social services.

Still, the former education secretary said the SUCs' admirable cash balances mean that these institutions have available resources that they can use for the meantime.

Further, Abad said the proposed SUCs budget for 2011 total at P23.4 billion, higher by 22.6 billion or 13.3 percent than the 2010 allocation.

Receiving items

He attributed the year-on-year increase to the implementation of the Salary Standardization Law III, which provides for increases government employees' pay.

On the other hand, non-recurring items worth P1.3 billion for maintenance and other operating expenditures plus P1.8 billion for capital outlay were not included in the 2011 proposal.

Abad said that an omnibus rule applied in crafting the proposed budget for 2011 provides that non-recurring items—including congressional initiatives such as those for maintenance and outlay—were not to be included in order to free funds for urgent programs.

"With limited public funds and the chronic emergency in the basic public services sector, the regular government had to make a choice," he said. "If we do not start fixing the problems in basic education now, then these will also derail tertiary education in the long term."

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5th Food Industry Sanitation And Urban Pest & Agro-Management

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

My warmest greetings to the National Committee on Urban Pest Control (NCUPC) as you spearhead the celebration of the 14th National Urban Pest Control Week.

As urban centers grow, the need for effective, sustainable and environmentally conscientious ways to undertake urban pest control becomes more apparent. The NCUPC's efforts in meeting this need are truly commendable. Together, let us defend our people against the disease that urban pests bring to our urban areas, and contribute to a healthier, more secure, and consequently more productive populace.

We are all aware of the problems we face as a nation, and have in fact all, at one point or another, voiced our cynicism and despair. But now that the people themselves have directed us towards the straight and righteous path, it is incumbent upon each and every one of us - from the public sector to the private; from the most ordinary individual to the grandest collective - to take part in the solution. It is now time to be catalysts of hope. It is now time to rebuild and heal our nation.

Because indeed, the situation has changed - *Pwede na muling mangarap. Tayo nang lumunggo sa kalbaryan ng ating mga pangarap.*

BENIGNO AQUINO III
President of the Republic of the Philippines

PROGRAMME

Ayala-Alabang pools eyed as dengue source

By Miko Morales

A total 89 dengue cases had been recorded in the posh Ayala Alabang Village, and officials suspect that swimming pools and lakes both maintained by homeowners would be the culprit.

Although the dengue incidence in Muntinlupa plummeted by 77 percent from last year, the number of confirmed cases in the upscale, gated community almost doubled from 20 in 2009 to 53 as of Sept. 20 this year, according to Dodo Mamaplilan, secretary of Barangay Ayala-Alabang.

"Our barangay is very square, and there are houses which have swimming pools and lakes both that have been maintained by owners," he told the inquirer.

"Our measures against dengue avoid matter if these pools are not [properly] maintained," he added.

Neglected by owners

He added that some of the pools might have been left unattended by their owners who would have been out of town or overseas.

Compared to the eight other barangays in the city, Ayala Alabang has the highest number of cases, prompting the city's top health official to launch an inquiry. The "well-off" village is about 609 hectares big.

"For us, the increase in dengue incidence is already alarming," Mamaplilan said. "But we cannot just barge into those houses which have maintained pools because we fear we could be sued for trespassing."

But he said the barangay can evoke emergency powers to justify entry into houses with pools or ponds filled with stagnant water.

In a separate interview, city health chief Dr. Lilibeth Belac said she immediately formed an investigation team to look into the matter.

She confirmed having heard about reports on the unattended pools which could have been a breeding ground for dengue-carrying mosquitoes.

Abandoned houses

"In our standard practice, we have dispatched teams of investigators not only on Ayala Alabang (Village), but also in the other barangays to verify the incidence of dengue in their areas," Belac said.

Ayala Alabang Village manager Ramon Fernandez confirmed that there were indeed houses with pools in Ayala Alabang which have been abandoned for various reasons.

But he pointed out that these select pieces of property—some foreclosed by banks or abandoned by heirs of deceased owners—are being monitored and taken care of.

In a phone interview, Fernandez said he did not know about the story of unattended pools possibly now serving as breeding ground of mosquitoes, but pointed out that the village homeowners association had been aggressive in its campaign against the disease.

"I don't have any information on that," he said over the phone. "But there are factors in the community which are now being identified by the organization through an inventory."

Confirmed Cases

The city health office has recorded 226 confirmed dengue cases in Muntinlupa from January to Sept. 20.

What puzzled Belac was the sudden jump in the number of cases this month from the 94 incidents tallied by the end of August.

According to data from the city health office, Ayala Alabang contributed to the most double-digit number of confirmed cases in the third quarter of the year, while incidence of the dengue in other barangays have started to drop this month.

Of the nine barangays, Ayala Alabang is situated in a elevated area, compared to others which have creeks or waterways where mosquitoes thrive.

Overall, Muntinlupa continues to be the least affected municipality in Metro Manila, Belac explained, crediting this to the efforts of the city government to keep their locality as clean as possible.

Bayad Center launches Promo for SSS Members

SSS members will now get a chance to win cash prizes simply by paying their SSS contributions and loan payments at Bayad Center.

Bayad Center, Inc. is raffling off cash prizes of P5,000 each to lucky SSS members through an electronic raffle program titled "Like Lihog Cash Papremyo: Libayo Lingging Panalo," which will run from September 1, 2011 up to February 28, 2012.

This program is open to all SSS members who are self-employed, voluntary, and OFWs, and who are paying their SSS contributions and salary, real estate and calamity loans at any Bayad Center branch excluding SM Payment Centers.

Participating SSS members will earn one (1) raffle entry for each type of loan and contribution payment they can make in a month.

Raffle draws, within the six month promo period, will be made twice a month: at the 25th Bayad Center Head Office starting on September 30 and 31 then on October 14 and 31, November 11 and 15, and December 9 and 15, 2011.

Raffle draw schedules for next year will be on January 6 and 10, February 1 and 15, and March 2, 2012.

There will be two winners per draw, to be supervised by a SSS representative, or four winners per month who can win P5,000.00 each.

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For more information, visit www.bayadcenter.com or go to your nearest Bayad Center.

CIS Bayad Center, the trailblazer and market leader in the payment collection business, has now over 1,400 Bayad Center branches located nationwide that accepts payments for over 400 brands covering Gas, Non-Gas, Telephone, Cellphone, Internet, Cable TV, Utilities, Insurance, and Insurance among others. It has started providing Filipinos all over the country convenient ways to pay their bill since 1993, and is still continuing to make partnerships that will enable them to provide further assistance for both the billers and the Filipinos.

Send Pinoy illegals home from Saudi, gov't asked

By Jerome Aning

AN ALLIANCE of overseas Filipino workers' groups in the Middle East called on the foreign and labor departments to work for the repatriation of all undocumented Filipinos in Saudi Arabia after Saudi King Abdullah announced a tough position for all illegally staying foreigners in the kingdom.

"The Philippine embassy and consulates should provide assistance for all undocumented OFWs without difficulty. This is an opportunity ... that should not be wasted as the Philippines post should immediately guide those concerned how to avail of the pardon," Migrante Middle East said in a statement.

Migrante Middle East regional coordinator John Leonard Monterona, who is based in the Saudi capital Riyadh, called on Filipino diplomats and labor officials "to be pro-active in providing assistance and guidance to illegal and undocumented OFWs so that they could be home without any problem and hassle."

The Saudi interior ministry earlier announced what it called a "royal blanket pardon" for all Saudis, Haj and Umrah visitors who have violated the country's immigration laws.

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BIR to check if 'jueteng' people are paying taxes

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue (BIR) is investigating the people named in the Senate inquiry into "jueteng" to determine if they are paying the correct taxes, BIR Commissioner Kim Henares said yesterday.

In a press conference in the Department of Justice, Henares said the BIR had already started looking into the tax records of those identified by Archbishop Oscar Cruz and Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago as being involved in the illegal numbers racket.

"I think it is but normal for the BIR to investigate things when information is being provided to us," Henares said. "Yes, we have started [an investigation]."

Henares said the BIR would try to "validate" if those persons were paying the right taxes, based on their lifestyle.

"When we validate, we are not really finding out whether they are from jueteng or not. We're validating if they have this kind of a lifestyle and based on their record in us, did they file income taxes to support that lifestyle?" she said.

Children at Ateneo

Henares said that the BIR would look into the properties and lifestyle of the jueteng personalities and see if the taxes they paid were enough.

"There will always be evidence that will be discovered. For example, if they have children studying at the Ateneo but do not have scholarships. Where did they get [the money for] that?" she said.

"If you have money, you pay up a house. You buy a car. That is the natural human tendency. That will be seen. We will then look into our dates if they filed their income tax returns and if they pay their taxes," she added.

BEFORE
Residents swim their way across a street at Barangay Hillcrest in Cainta, Rizal, on Sept. 27, 2009.

ONE YEAR AFTER
Life is back to normal at Barangay Hillcrest in the photo taken on Sept. 17, 2010.

Kids express horrors in healing artworks during Read-Along

From page A1

her family during a storm which caused a huge flood reminiscent of that brought by Ondoy.

The children spent some 20 minutes showing their experiences. Cruz facilitated the sharing of stories behind the drawings in one group of children, while Sy handled the other group.

Open-ended activity

"The way the activity was introduced was open-ended—we just instructed them to draw what they remember. It could have been positive or negative—it could be the middle of Ondoy or its aftermath," Cruz said.

"Drawing was also striking for me in their sharing of their drawings is that while most of them remembered scenes during the storm, they did not include themselves as part of their drawings," she said.

One possible explanation, she said "is that they're already unbroken or maybe they have already detached themselves from the event."

"It can also be that they still can't include themselves in their drawings," Cruz added.

By drawing what they remember, their children also process it," she said. "It's therapeutic for them."

Standout

One drawing stood out from her group. It was a scene where people were already cleaning up.

"The drawing was really bright and colorful—for me, that kind is outstanding way to recover," Cruz said.

"As in her drawing, it seems that color has already returned to her life as well," Sy said.

Drawing is also an outlet for children's emotions, Sy said, adding that it is "a way for them to process and to let out their feelings."

"Sometimes, especially if children are traumatized, they could verbalize their experiences," she explained. "This can either add to or lead to depression."

"If they can draw their experiences, they are able to detach themselves from them, to describe them from the outside—instead of always internalizing it," Sy said.

Common elements

Sy agreed with Cruz that the prominent elements were dark clouds, floods and other negative experiences.

"But when the children started sharing their experiences with the group, they also stressed that those things were already in the past, that [the] have already managed to overcome them," Sy said.

"The kids also said they learned a lot, and they are wanted to focus on their schooling today."

Cruz described children as "resilient, resilient." Most of those who came, she said, "are already on their way to

From page A1

rebuilding their lives."

Sharing experiences

Avril, Abby, Angelo and Ferra, all 11-year-old Grade 6 pupils, shared their memories of Ondoy after finishing their drawings.

"I was playing in the rain that morning. The rain rising I knew the flood was already high. I helped my family move our things to higher ground," Avril said. She drew dark clouds, pouring rain and deep floods.

Abby, his classmate, said she was watching television at home when the flooding started. "The water started rising very quickly," she said. "We had to move our things to higher places, like tables and our TV. Our neighbors came to help us."

The flood stricken school is who did not have several floors came to low with no transportation. Because of the flood. Others were no electricity. We had to wade through the floods. It was a difficult time," Abby said.

Sy drawing shows a girl standing in waist-deep yellow filthy with trash and black clouds hovering above. Asked why the girl was smiling, Abby explained: "It's because [she] is already recovering."

Coping ways

Sy asked the children what they had thought about to cheer themselves up in the midst of Ondoy. Abby answered: "That it will all be over soon."

When it rained in that they distracted themselves by reading, texting happy memories, playing games, bonding on their homework and even exchanging jokes.

"When evening comes, we were obviously getting stressed in the house," Ara said.

Angelina, another participant, said in Filipino: "Hindi inilog 1 still remember Ondoy's name)."

Asked if they thought drawing their memories and recalling their experiences were hard for them, the children said no. "I don't think so," Pearl said.

"We can't change the fact that it already happened anyway," Abby said. "I think it was good that we were able to share these stories with each other."

Valuable life experience

For Angelo, the activity lifted his spirits. "At first, I felt that I was the only one who suffered during Ondoy. Today, after hearing other people's stories, I realized that I'm not alone."

The children said their experiences had shaped how they have been dealing with storms that came after Ondoy. "I remember that time 'Pepeng' hit our house, my mother didn't worry although he," Abby said.

Abby and the other children wanted Ondoy as a very valuable life experience. "Our parents don't have to tell us anymore what to do in the event that a similar thing happens again because we've already gone through it and now we know what to do next time," Abby said.

They escaped watery graves but are now called 'living dead'

From page A1

The temporary shelter and relief assistance from the government and private organizations had lasted for only six months after Ondoy.

Sari Sari says she was forced to stop sending her three young children to school and instead, let them wander in the city to ask for alms from passersby. "We'd rather worry about how we could buy rice than their school's fees," she says.

Trapped on rooftop

Sari Sari recalls how her family was trapped for almost three days—without food—on the rooftop of their house when water from Laguna Lake rose.

"We had nowhere to return to. The flood already washed out our houses," she says.

According to Roderick Bunao, who acts as the community leader, most of the men have lost their jobs as magsasakyan (boatmen makers) because the flood swept away the boats. Boatmen-making was a common livelihood in Muhlan.

The other men, he says, found jobs in the shipping container of the country.

No more housing units

"We were promised homes; otherwise, we would not be moving here for nothing. But we were just told by the DPWH (Department of Social Welfare and Development). But there were no more units available for the resettlement area," Bunao says.

Most of the children are now catching fish and leaving their culture, he adds.

The builder of the concrete chair a single toilet and drain water from a pump. In one

From page A1

house, three families share the space and sleep on one cot.

There is no electricity.

Bunao worries that the government would deny them every as soon as the construction finishes on December. "It seems they have forgotten about us here," he says.

Resettlement

Some 500 other families were included provisional housing units in a resettlement area in Barangay Langkiwa.

According to Councilor Gat Alaiki, those staying at the common may have failed to qualify for the program of the National Housing Authority.

"The DSWD determined relocating the evictees really discovered in homicide from the housing project. Others could return to their homes but just did not want to," Alaiki says.

Readiness

In Langkiwa, the evictees were trained in bag-making to a livelihood skill. "Some have returned to their jobs in town," Alaiki says.

City information officer Eva Estrella said that after Ondoy, city officials had formed a task

HOMES RAMPED Flood victims build a community inside a cemetery in Barangay San Antonio, Binan City, some all or "Ondoy" as dead away their homes.

THE LIVING AND THE DEAD Rare of many "quarantine type" tombs are overcluttered shelters being use to dry in the village of the living dead in Binan City.

'HEDGING DEAL'

Psalm denies ₱100-M loss

THE GOODYEAR-led Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm) has denied reports that it has ₱100 million in refund with an international investment company that went bankrupt in 2008.

Contrary to the allegations of Markets Senior Rep. Bert Emmanuel Perez, Psalm said the deal is covered into with Lehman Brothers Special Financing Inc. (LBSFI) in July 2007 was not an investment but a "hedging transaction."

"The hedging transaction was a deal on an insurance against foreign exchange volatility," Psalm said.

Insurance deal

According to a Psalm statement, the transaction was a principal only swap (POS), which is likened to an insurance purchase, under which Psalm pays an annual expense premium of 2.647 percent on the notional amount of $300 million for 15 years.

In exchange, Psalm or the Philippine government has the right to buy dollars at ₱44.788 in 2020, regardless of the foreign exchange rate at that time, it said.

When Lehman went bankrupt, Psalm invoked the International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA) agreement, terminated the transaction on Nov. 3, 2008, and replaced it with a new POS with the same terms and conditions," Psalm said.

Derivatives

The New York-based ISDA is a trade organization of participants in the market for over-the-counter derivatives. It has created a standardized contract, the ISDA Master Agreement, for derivatives transactions.

Psalm said it also filed its claims to a New York court by approximately $3.4 million representing the cost of the replacement of the POS and other expenses (legal fees, damages, etc.) it can now be allowed under ISDA provisions.

The group of foreign banks that took over the POS deal was chosen through a competitive solicitation process under the guidance of the Government Policy Steering Board, the Department of Finance, and the Bureau of the Treasury, Psalm said.

Napocor paid

"Contrary to [reports], allegations, Psalm did receive the proceeds from the preliminary estimate of power assets in the deal," the statement said.

Until May 2008, Psalm said it was the National Power Corp. (Napocor) that had paid the required premiums in the deal.

Psalm is a state corporation created in 2008 to undertake the privatization of the assets and liabilities of the Napocor and the National Transmission Corp. (Transco).

Amy R. Remo

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BUY win

Aquino party feasts on hotdogs in NY street, pays $54

From page A1

on the way on Wednesday (Thursday in Manila).

The packed schedule did not prevent Mr. Aquino from quitting a briefing for lunch at a secure stand near Sofitel Hotel, where he is staying, after the presidential party paid $54 (about P2,400) for the sandwiches and the drinks.

Mr. Aquino insisted. He used to treat the aides-masters dinner his predecessor, now Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and her entourage had during a visit to New York last year.

Mr. Aquino insisted. He used to treat the aides-masters of his mother, former President Corazon Aquino, who was honored by the college in 1986 following the first Edsa People Power Revolution for being an "inter-American alumna."

"I'm accepting this award, I am humbled by what the model represents: your solidarity with the people, focused within it to daily days. You stand with us now, in brighter days, the pursuit or pursuit of optimism are people, since the fall of Ferdinand Marcos," Mr. Aquino said.

Noynoy's prayer

The award is given for outstanding achievements, generosity of spirit, courage and many self-sacrifice reminiscent of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

The college gave Mr. Aquino the award for his deeds of changing our corruption and lifting the country up from poverty.

"My mother showed her speech of thanks ... with a prayer. She prayed that she faithful sustained my father and her, would sustain our people until the day of their redemption," Mr. Aquino said.

"A generation from now, perhaps another Filipino will stand here, and say to you: I am glad to say, that we remain not only free, but we now prosperous. We have broken the shackles of dictatorship but not the yoke of poverty. This is my prayer," he added.

Cory's classmates

Foreign Secretary Alfred Romualdez, Trade Secretary Gregory Domingo, Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima and Energy Secretary Rene Almendras—as well as business leaders in Mr. Aquino's delegation—joined the ceremonies at the college that was founded in 1946.

An audience of about 200 gathered at the school auditorium made of red brick and surrounded by rolling green hills, trees and flowers.

Also present were four Aquino-Cojuangco aunts and brothers-cousins of the Aquino Scholarship that offers free full-tuition, board-and scholarships to students of Filipino descent.

'Child of this college'

"Four brothers, five sisters, [Mr. Aquino] said, all children of this college," the college president, Charles Flynn, read the citation.

The late Cory Aquino received the medal on Sept. 21, 1986.

"Today ... the College of the Vincent is proud to celebrate you with the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Medal and thank you for the your service for your nation and its world," Flynn said.

He said Ms. Aquino gave "several life to the causes to which your parents dedicated their lives."

Phoenix said: "As public service, as a member of the House of Representatives, as Senator and now as President, you have worked to secure democracy and the rule of law and to ensure virtue, effective, efficient government."

"You know that government is not a necessary evil; it can be positive in action. You know that true democracy liberates people ... upon opportunity through education and fosters the enterprise through which families escape poverty and come to enjoy all of God's blessings," he added.

A stir in New York

Mr. Aquino, his US-based finance cousin, his Filipino guards, some officials, former Sen. Alan Peter and members of the media ate sandwiches at the corner of 56th Avenue and West 47th Street.

The President had his herring with onions, onions and a coke.

"Normally, my lunch is sandwich and soup," Mr. Aquino said, holding in hand.

Told he was causing quite a stir with patrons, and second him and the TV camera rolling, the President replied he had to go back to the hotel after a quick bite.

"I should be out of here in a couple of minutes," he said.

"But eating hotdogs at curbside was one of the things you look forward to when you come to New York," he added.

Memories of Boston

Mr. Aquino said it was something he and his family did when they went to New York during the time his late father, the murdered Senator Ben Benigno Aquino Jr., was in exile under the dictatorship.

He said that in Boston, where the Aquinos had briefly lived, they ate pizza.

"[At] part of the things that, when we're here, especially during the martial law years, we used to do with impunity," he said, adding that now he could only do it if allowed by his security people.

Cory's guard

One of the Secret Service agents assigned to him who guarded his mother when she visited the United States, he said.

A member of Mr. Aquino's party said the President's plane to eat at Joshua's was cancelled because the US Secret Service wouldn't allow it. Eating at the Filipino fast food outlet in Queens would supposedly require the presence of more security agents.

At the federal building visited, where Mr. Aquino ate his corned beef, Filipino reporters were asked by protesters who was wearing the bottleneck on the sidewalk, with the TV cameras reaching his every bite and the President hunkering with the media people.

Told it was Presidential Agents, were held up their digital cameras and cell phones to take his picture.

Italian food, too

On Wednesday morning, Mr. Aquino started with the editors and reporters of the Wall Street Journal at the Journal offices. He also met with officials of the Rockefeller Institute and the American Energy Society in Sofitel.

Aside from the hotdog-corner stand, Mr. Aquino had also eaten burgers as he and Ong.

But he didn't just eat lunch.

On Tuesday, he lunched at Brazilian Pidobono Grill between Park and Madison Avenue. That night, he dined at Bruno Bistro in Manhattan.

Brazilian, which caters to young professionals and business people, serves Italian dishes. Its official website shows that the cost of breakfast appetizers ranges from $6.50 to $18.75, while pasta dishes range from $13.50 to $25. Its most expensive dish offered for lunch, a Mediterranean seafood fillet, costs $26.

The Bruno Steakhouse website shows that it serves Italian meals and drinks. Its meals and snacks cost from $10 (boneless short ribs sliders) to $120 (aged prime porterhouse).

In his '01 trip last year, Aquino and his entourage dined at Gallagher's Steak Park restaurant in Cargo, consuming $20,000 (P1 million) worth of food and wine, during that visit. Aquino met with US President Barack Obama at the White House.

With a report from Inquirer Research

Don't bother to text Noy; he left cell phone at home in RP

From page A1

Aquino's media communications group members of the House of Representatives yanks the wires he supposed to congressional hearings on the budget.

House Minority Leader Edcel Lagman asked Communications Secretary Ricky Carandang why the President—now residing New York—had not answered Carandang's text messages on reading him on the "pawning" scandal involving the administration.

Carandang gave the lawmakers curt answer. The President's kept his cellphone.

"Yes, I have been texting the President, but I was informed by his staff that he had left his phone in Manila. So I don't think he got my first text," Carandang said.

'Miscommunication' group

At one point, Zambales Rep. Mitos Magsaysay said: "When the President leaves the country, he's supposed to say you can contact me at these or and so numbers. Right there, there's communications matters between your President and you guys. I don't know how to say this but, apparently, the Communications Group is really miscommunications group."

Magsaysay said she admired Carandang for his honesty but criticized him against making rash accusations against "he-She side of the country."

The other day, Carandang was asked by Malacañang reporters for Mr. Aquino's reaction on allegations linking Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno, a close friend of the President, to the illegal numbers racket.

Carandang had answered that Mr. Aquino had not replied to his messages, adding that since the President left for the United States on Monday, he had been hacking his cellphone "to minimize his duties."

Daily briefings

Carandang, head of the Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office, appeared before the House appropriations committee during its deliberation on the Office of the President's proposed P4.035-billion budget.

According to Carandang, he communicates with the President either by phone or by e-mail.

"I've been sending him informal text messages. But we've [also] been sending daily reviews of the news by e-mail to his staff. He's aware of what has been happening," he said.

Prolonged birth pains

Under grilling by lawmakers, the President's communications trio—Carandang, Secretary Herminia Coloma and Secretary Edwin Lacierda—conceded that they could have issued confusing messages to the public.

Carandang said there had been some "issues for confusion" in the past, and attributed this to the "birthing pains" of his newly created office.

Magsaysay following up: "How many months do the Filipinos have to sacrifice because of these birthing pains?"

Carandang replied: "Ma'am, if you look at the recent statements, I don't think there has been any confusion."

Better coordination

The three secretaries later admitted that they had started to coordination how to reply to reporters' questions and that no final message had to be eventually cleared by the President himself.

Lacierda said: "We recognize the confusion brought about by the hostage-taking incident. As a result of that, we have better coordination."

Pressed on their specific roles, Carandang and his job consisted of explaining Mr. Aquino's programs of government to the people while Coloma and Lacierda would explain the President's policies.

Coloma, who heads the Presidential Communications Operations Office—a merger of the defunct Office of the Press Secretary and the Government Information and Media Sector Office—said he was in charge of disseminating messages.

Inquisitive reporters

Lacierda, the presidential spokesperson, said he served as Mr. Aquino's "mouthpiece."

Coloma said they couldn't comply with Lacierda to deliver the President's message all by himself given that reporters ask questions on a range of issues from early morning to evening.

"It's physically impossible for one person to respond to all that queries," he said.

Bishop defends Atong: He's into jai-alai, not 'jueteng'

From page A1

Uson said Ang could not have been into jueteng while operating jai-alai, a supposedly legal but as of gambling caused through the Cagayan Special Economic Zone and Freeport.

"It's my understanding that Atong Ang, although he's formerly very active in jueteng, now lists jueteng because he wants his jai-alai business to expand," he told the Inquirer.

Uson added: "If he's for jueteng, he can't be for jueteng at the same time because one cancels the other."

In a phone interview, Ang said it would be in his favor if jueteng was stamped out for good.

"Every town has a parlor, once in terms of gambling for patronage," he said in Filipino. "Jueteng, jai-alai, and other forms of gambling compete with each other. So it all boils down to marketing your business."

Ang maintained that he never dabbled in jueteng, a form of underground lottery that caused the downfall of the Estrada administration when he was a gambling consultant.

On his list, Santiago named Ang, a former gambling buddy of deposed President Joseph Estrada, as the top gambling operator in terms of province covered in Region 1 to 6.

The list showed that Ang was operating a numbers game called "Virtual 2" in Nueva Vizcaya, Isabela, Cauayan, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte and Cagayan Province.

Also on the list were Dinah Sotelo, Bong Pineda, Aging Llanes, Tony Santos, Boom Boom Gov. Chavit Singson, Danny Fontanos, Don Raimon, Ronald Lim and Ernest Bustamante.

Santiago said in the open session that Ang and jueteng was Brazil-ing in the country because the interior secretary and the head of the Philippine National Police were on the payroll of gambling operations.

The senator claimed that the interior secretary and PNP chief got a combined P800,000 from a cross, equivalent to 1 percent of the P80 billion in annual gross receipts of the illegal numbers racket.

'I could be wrong'

Cam, head of the People's Crusade Against Jueteng, addressed Santiago's privilege speech and handed them copies of four unsigned sworn personalities.

But he said authorities should consider it as a lead for further investigation. "I'm not God," he said. "It's possible that I could be wrong. But what I know is what I know."

The list that Cruz furnished the Senate showed that Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno and former PNP Director Gen. Jesse Nicolas, who retired from the police force, jueteng operations in P6 million monthly from jueteng operations.

The list named in jueteng operations Gov. Lilia Pineda for Pampanga, Gov. Antonio Kalaw for Tarlac, Paul Hagedorn for Sur Isabela, retired Court Supt. Eugene Martin and Major Reginaldo Rosegaran for Baguio, Benny Fontanos for Cagayan Valley, Ben Abalos for Bataan, and retired Chief Supt. Rosario Padilla for Ilocos Norte, Laguna, and Pasay (Bicolandia and Metropolitan—all of Southern Manila.

Coacoonut in plunder

Ang was jailed as a coconspirator in the plunder case against Estrada. In March 2007, Ang pleaded guilty to corruption of a public official in relation to indirect bribery during his cross-examination.

For pleading guilty to the lesser offense, he avoided serving a possible sentence of up to 40 years—the maximum prison term for plunder.

Ang also agreed to return P25 million, he alleged share in the jueteng take, to the government of diverting in connivance with Estrada.

The charge sheet said that of the P130 million in tobacco excise taxes directed in 2006 from the coffers of Ilocos Sur, P70 million was allegedly produced by Estrada, P20 million went to Estrada's wife Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, P10 million to their son Jinggoy and P20 million to Ang, which he later admitted in the plea bargain agreement.

After his release following a two-year probation in 2009, Ang said he decided to concentrate on the "legal" gambling jai-alai.

Meridien Vista

He is now a consultant for Meridien Vista Gaming Corp., whose business, supposedly owned "first to all provinces," is still small, he said.

Ang said some jai-alai executives groused some former jueteng collectors.

"Gambling workers have no other job," he said. "You can't turn them into an salesmen because they're not what they do. They just basically move from one gambling venue to another for livelihood."

Angara

Sen. Edgardo Angara lauded Santiago for her privilege speech.

But Angara said his colleague should also identify "politically elected officials" who might be involved in the illegal numbers racket.

"They would be answerable to the people," he said. But even without specific accusations, "exposure is itself public condemnation. That's enough punishment," he added.

Angara, whose province is the home of Erich Santiago, mentioned to jueteng fine, said the investigation in the Senate was a misdeed.

"When we really need to tackle is jueteng [using the best of political and police coverage]," he said.

Vicious cycle

Angara said the President should come out with a clear position against jueteng.

"He can break the vicious cycle if the highest official in our country will make a stand," the senator said in an interview on dzEC radio.

The Senate will hold its second hearing on jueteng on Tuesday. Invited were PNP Director General Raul Bacalzo, Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno. With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

'DILG + PNP = JUETENG'

Miriam's equation doesn't add up

By Alcuin Papa

SANTIAGO

FOR THE RUBBERNECKING National Police (PNP), Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago's equation of "DILG + PNP = Juetang" does not compute.

In a privilege speech on Wednesday, Santiago said juetang, or the illegal numbers game, thrived because of a conspiracy between a corrupt Department of Interior and Local Government and equally corrupt Philippine National Police.

"But anyone dabbled the perfect formula for juetang to flourish that: the juetang lords choose the DILG head who in turn chooses the PNP chief."

Reacting to the senator's speech, PNP Chief Director Gen. Raul Bacalzo said he did not owe his appointment to anyone.

'Won't compute'

"On the equation of Sen. Santiago, I must say that in my case, my appointment as PNP Chief was not because of my closeness to anybody, much less the DILG Secretary. Therefore, the rest of the equation will not compute," Bacalzo said in a statement.

Bacalzo said the PNP shares the objective of Santiago which is to "rid our country of jueteng and all other forms of illegal gambling."

"We have said time and again that jueteng is multi-dimensional problem that needs the cooperation of all sectors," he said.

Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo also denied Santiago's allegation that he was collecting jueteng payola.

"I'm denying the allegation because as far as I'm concerned, from where I came from, my position on the numbers game has been very clear," Robredo told reporters yesterday.

Where he was accused of Mega-City, Robredo said he launched a campaign against the illegal numbers game "because we felt that it was wrong for gaming to proliferate in our jurisdiction."

He also said that he would be appearing in a Senate hearing soon.

"I'll provide additional information if there is additional information. If there is some confirmation and if we are able to confirm, we will confirm. If we are able to validate (the information) that some are true or not true, then, that's it," he said.

Robredo said it was too early for him to validate Santiago's information that the DILG Secretary is on the jueteng payola payroll.

"I think while there may be some basis, I think at this point, we've been in the office for only two months, it's premature to make that conclusive as yet," he said.

Bacalzo said he had ordered an investigation and validation of the information on jueteng pronounced by Santiago and related to Bishop Oscar Cruz before the Senate.

"I have ordered the Directorate for Intelligence and the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management to validate the information and to take care build-up. We will investigate and bring violators to court, according to the law," said Bacalzo, who is a lawyer.

He also called on the public to come forward with any information that could help police.

'Holistic approach'

Bacalzo stressed that the eradication of jueteng requires a "holistic" approach "that takes into consideration the social, psychological, legal and economic dimensions which encourage the proliferation of jueteng."

But he said the PNP would continue to fulfill its law enforcement role against jueteng by going after jueteng operators.

"We will sustain the crackdown of raids and other police operations against those involved in the proliferation of this nefarious activity. We will file cases as all those arrested will be charged in court," he said.

Bacalzo earlier ordered the implementation of a "zero-strike" policy on jueteng for all PNP regional directors and subordinate commanders.

Duterte turned down DILG post, says lawyer

By Kristine L. Alave

PRESIDENT AQUINO offered the post of secretary of interior and local government to former Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, but he turned it down, Duterte's lawyer said yesterday.

Lawyer Edna Herrera Batacan said Duterte, who ran and won as Davao City vice mayor after his third term expired in the May 10 polls, was "offered" by Aquino to head the Department of Interior and Local Government. "He could have had DILG," she said in a media interview yesterday.

But Duterte rejected the offer, saying he was not cut for the job, Herrera-Batacan said. She also noted that Duterte would rather stay in Davao City where he spent 18 years as mayor.

Duterte gained notoriety in the past year for his alleged heavy-handed approach towards criminals in Davao City prompting the Commission on Human Rights to investigate the allegations that he approved the extrajudicial killings of alleged drug pushers and criminals in the city.

Herrera-Batacan made the revelation in an ambush interview at the Sandiganbayan, where she asked the court to dismiss the prosecution's request to issue a warrant of arrest against Duterte.

The case stemmed from graft charges filed by Duterte's rival and former House of Representatives Speaker Prospero Nograles, who ran and lost to mayor in the last elections. Nograles' opponent was Duterte's daughter, Sara.

Nograles said Duterte and five others illegally demolished the cover of a canal he installed in Davao City in 2008. According to the prosecution, the canal cover was put in place in response to the dance of the residents living near it.

Duterte told the reporter of the P2-million-canal cover was approved by local officials. He noted that he ordered its removal to facilitate the flow of water during heavy rains. The canal, according to Duterte's camp, aggravated the flooding in the city.

Herrera-Batacan said Duterte and his co-accused should not be arrested because the charges against them are baseless. From the court of appeals, based on evidence presented by both sides, dismissed the graft charges against them, she said.

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September 30	Los Piñas, Fairview, Pasig
October 1	Cainta Station, Rosales
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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2010

LAGUNA (SAN PABLO CITY)

BETWEEN 1:00AM AND 4:00PM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT SAN PABLO 3 #3961

Portions of Prof. Paz Road Track from near Santa Ana Elementary School in Brgy. San Antonio 2 to San Pablo City, Laguna – Tabang Quezon Provincial Highway

REASON: Various maintenance work along PNR Rail Road Track in Brgy. San Antonio 2, San Pablo City, Laguna.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2010

CAVITE (GEN. TRIAS AND TANZA)

BETWEEN 1:00AM AND 5:00AM AND THEN BETWEEN 1:00PM AND 4:00PM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT TANZA, GEN. TRIAS AND PORTION OF CIRCUIT ARGENTINA #3962

Portion of Antero Soriano Highway from Manuela Tanza substation in Gen. Trias-Manuela Road including Arnaiz Elementary School, Manuela Village, Santa Maya Elementary School, Santa Rosenda Park, Fernandez Subd., Bgy. Arnaiz, Tanza; Tejero and Governors Subd.

Portion of Tanza – Trias Municipal Road from Antero Soriano Highway to and including Fernandez Joya Elementary School, Magsaysay Machinery Corp., Consolidated Marine Research Foundation, St. Peregrine Elementary School, Santa Maria Elementary School and Bellavista Village in Bgy. Biga, Bautista and Richland, Tanza.

Portion of Gen. Trias Municipal Road from Antero Soriano Highway to Bgy. Pasong Camachile including Gen. Trias Town proper, Bgy. Subd., Medina Pueblo, Rosario Subd., San Jose Bgy. Hall & Health Station, Bgy. Poblacion Subd., San Antonio Subd., San Gabriel Area 900 Bdl. Trias Subd., Greenwood Homes, Wakasuki Homes, Camachile Subd., Grand Riverside Subd., Gen. Pascual Memorial Park, El Dios San Juan, Manuela Pasong Camachile and Sta. Clara, Gen. Trias.

REASON: Maintenance work inside Manuela Tanza substation.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2010

MAGNOLIA/SNO CITY

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 4:00AM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT SN-MAGNOLIA #616

Portion of Epifanio Delos Santos Ave. (EDSA) from Quezon Ave. to and including Robinson's Galleria Complex in Bgy. Ugong, Valenzuela City.

REASON: Maintenance works inside Manuela SN/Magnolia substation.

BULACAN

BETWEEN 1:00PM AND 4:00PM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS MEXICO EAST AND WEST

Portion of J. P. Rizal, Juan Bautista Sts. and Simpauico Road from Adrian Subd. in Bgy. Bulaon and J. Tiano to Quintan Sts. in Bgy. Sto. Cristo, Angat including Bgys. Buenavista 1, Buenavista 2, Paltacan, Magong, Banaa, Wawakeng, Lumo, Calumpang, Binagbag, Ibayong, Pulong Buhangin, Ibaba, Donacion, Malonzo, Sta. Cruz, Angat.

Portion of Quezon, Fernando, M. Fernando and Guzman Sts. from near Kalantukan and/or Bgy. Sampaguita to Bgy. Poblacion, Sta. Cruz including Bgys. Labne, Duhatan, Malumpati, Sta. Lucia, Lalig, Bamban, Bayabas, Barangay, Cawayan, Encanto, Patnal, San Pedro, Sto. Cristo and Sta. Cruz in Angat.

Bgy. Mapulang Lupa, Bgy. Bayabas, Camachile, Pulong Buhangin and Bagong Silang in Doña Remedios Trinidad.

Bgy. Pinagtulayan in Norzagaray.

Bgys. Pulo, Tabing-ilog, Tabang Pantabang and Tumana in San Rafael.

Bgy. Tukod in San Ildefonso.

REASON: Testing work inside Meralco Angat substation.

THURSDAY TO FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 – OCTOBER 1, 2010

LAGUNA (CALAMBA CITY)

BETWEEN 11:00PM (TH) – SEPTEMBER 30 AND 4:00AM (FR) – OCTOBER 1 FOR THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT CANLUBANG #3161

Portion of Calamba National Road from Gen. Antillon to Pinpin Street, including Bukal Park Subd., Mariano Ong Store, J. Rosario Commercial Bldg., Philippine Veterans Bank (Crossing), Valentino Ng Piano and Pinpin Bgy. Hall.

Portion of Mayapyap Area from Calamba National Road to Calamba City Hall including Mt. Carmel Subd., St. Vincent Village, Dragon Martial Pharmaceutical and Electrical Plant in Bgy. Real, La Mesa Ridge, Mabuhay Building, Diamond and Villa De Calamba in Bgy. La Mesa.

REASON: Maintenance work along Calamba National Road in Bgy. Real, Calamba City, Laguna.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2010

MANILA (SAN MIGUEL)

BETWEEN 5:00AM AND 9:00AM AND THEN BETWEEN 1:00PM AND 4:00PM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT TESDO #28

Portion of J. Nepomuceno St. (Tandazo) from Dan Subeni St. to Antipas St. including Tandazo Dialtera and Antipolo De San Jose.

REASON: Preventive maintenance and testing work inside Meralco Tagpo substation.

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OPINION

Surrender

EDITORIAL

THE SENATE hearing on Jueteng has turned out to be a disaster for Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno, and it threatens to produce another disaster for the entire nation.

Still reeling from the embarrassment over the failed hostage rescue attempt last Aug. 23, Puno found himself again in the center of another controversy when his name landed on a list submitted by retired Archbishop Oscar Cruz to the Senate as one of the "ultimate recipients" of Jueteng payola. Puno, who is in charge of police matters in the Department of Interior and Local Government, may have been wrongly accused, but he did not help dissipate suspicious minds with his evasive answers during the Senate hearing last Sept. 21.

Questioned by senators, Puno admitted that "friends and local officials" had tried to set up a meeting between him and some Jueteng operators. At first he refused to identify the operators, saying that revealing their names would put to waste "months of surveillance" undertaken by the police, but later admitted that one of them was Bong Pineda, the husband of the Pampanga governor. However, Puno was adamant in refusing to name the customers' intermediaries, barely explaining that he could not remember their names anymore since he received so many visitors during the two months or so that he has been in his post. If only because there are now doubts about Puno's integrity, President Aquino should seriously consider accepting his resignation.

But if Puno's lack of candor was disappointing, the solution to the old illegal numbers game now being suggested by some senators is disturbing, to say the least. Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and Sen. Jinggoy Estrada have revived the easy solution put forward by the President that Jueteng brought down, Joseph Estrada, which is to legalize jueteng. This proposal reveals a sense of helplessness on the part of the Senate in upholding the law when criminal syndicates put it to a test. The call sounds like a declaration of surrender.

The illegal numbers game, the arguments goes, has been around since time immemorial and has persisted despite ceaseless attempts to stamp it out. If we allow the rich their excessively wasteful vices, why not let the poor enjoy some of their small indulgences? Besides, without jueteng, thousands of rural families who rely on that illegal numbers racket for livelihood will die of hunger.

We disagree. We are with Archbishop Oscar Cruz of Ecuador Labaw in Jueteng in saying that jueteng can be stopped. Cruz says it's just a matter of coming off its "wet legs" that bring it from one house to another, with impunity: the local officials and the police officers who tolerate or protect its operations. And he points to the constitution in the country where jueteng for masses) can't proliferate to grow this.

Indeed, jueteng must be stopped. Not just because like all forms of gambling, it erodes a people's cultural and moral foundations and corrupts social institutions, including the Church, but more importantly because, contrary to what some people say that it is the least destructive of all forms of gambling, it is the worst.

First of all, it strikes into the very heart of our society the friendly. Other games of chance draw "suckers" to casinos. This one is door-to-door pick-up and delivery. Nobody makes a living from visiting the houses of the poor and inviting them to a casino or to a game of mah-jong or mahjong.

Second, it is oppressive, of the poor more especially. In fact, it primarily targets the poor. Worse, it is a one game. Jueteng is not a game of chance, or a game of luck. The winning numbers are pre-selected before each draw, depending on which combination of numbers the smallest bet has been placed.

It is open even to the poorest man who is foolish enough to part with the last centavos in his pocket and to risk losing his family's next meal for the chance to win in a game that is heavily stacked against him. Jueteng impoverishes the poor even more only to make the jueteng bosses super-rich, while the collectors doing the dirty work can't provide their families a decent existence.

Simply put, jueteng victimizes the poor more than anybody. Legalizing it is tantamount to inviting them to entrust their day-to-day survival to chance. It is like legalizing deceit.

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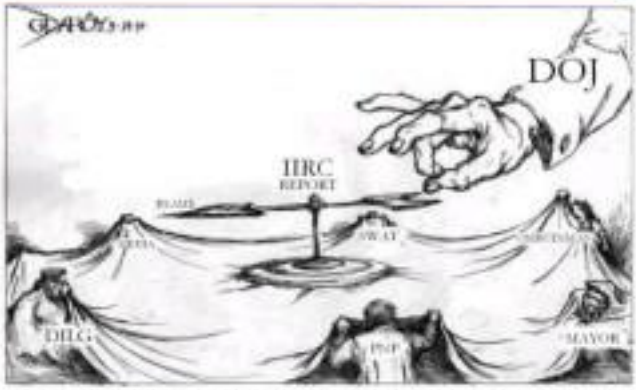


Driver's license printer has no contract with LTO

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY JOSE "Joey" de Jesus did right in canceling the bidding, scheduled for today, for the production of new driver's licenses. The fact alone that the Land Transportation Office (LTO) seems in a hurry to bid out the project (its licensed bidders, assembling to rebid) has a giveaway.

There are many mysteries going on at the LTO and Dr. Jesus should look closely into its affairs. For one, it appears that the LTO is the private preserve of the Iglesia ni Cristo. Most contracts are awarded by the LTO to members of the INC. In fact, the present LTO chief, Assistant Transportation Secretary Virgie Torres, is a well-known INC member. The owner of the present printer of drivers' licenses, Assignmental Motors Inc. (Amgel), is Filoman Corona, a senior member of the INC.

Aside from the issue of new drivers' licenses, which we will discuss later, there is the issue of the late delivery by the LTO of vehicle plates. It takes the LTO contractor at least three months to produce the plates. During that time, motorists of new vehicles become victims, repeatedly, of carnapping and traffic enforcers. Although the owners have receipts showing that they have paid all fees to the LTO, traffic enforcers still arrest them and fine them P500 each time officially for having expired registration stickers which are good only three-way for sale-wrok.

Why does the LTO allow the use of synthetic plates for only one week when it cannot deliver vehicle plates within one week? It is the fault of the LTO, not the owners, that the vehicles have no new plates, so why punish the owners?

After the driver or owner has paid the fee, he can be arrested again for the same violation.

How much is drivers' licenses? More than three million drivers' licenses are printed every year. At P500 per card, this gives the long-time contractor, Amgel, P500 million a year. Amgel has been the LTO's card printer since the time of President Estrada's presidency. It has been deeply entrenched in the LTO for the past three decades. But its contract expired in 2005. Its

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

for the past seven years, it has been operating and has lost paid P500 millions a year without a contract. In 2005, from 2005 to the present, Amgel was paid by the LTO's PCIC P2.5 billion without a valid contract with the government.

What should have been done in the first place? The basic rule in government procurement is that where a supplier's contract expires, the project is opened for public bidding. Therefore, when the Amgel contract expired in 2005, the new contract should have been publicly bidded out immediately and every year thereafter because the budget for the printing of drivers' licenses is a yearly appropriation in the national budget. But the LTO did no such thing. For seven years, it did business with Amgel without a valid contract.

With the change of administration, the LTO knew that it could not continue with its questionable activities. Last June, the previous administration tried to bid out the contract for 2011 (at seven years, to be fair, however, many provincial bidders protested because the terms of bidding since 1989 clearly favored Amgel (is that a surprise?). When the bidders made their protest public, the LTO suspended the bidding.

However, Torres, the new LTO chief, announced the bidding process and scheduled it for June 16 with exactly the same TOR. Some of the bidders went to Dr. Jesus and complained that the TOR clearly favored the present supplier and its partners. The DOTC told the LTO to postpone the bidding while the TOR was being reviewed.

In an attempt to circumvent the review of the TOR, the LTO resorted to "midnight" bidding. The firm one answered the questions of the bidders but did not change the skewed TOR. The second bidders submitted the bidding on Sept. 24, exactly one week after it was postponed. This is the bidding that Dr. Jesus stopped.

What are the questionable provisions of the TOR?

1. The LTO wants to go back to drivers' licenses made of paper, instead of plastic cards.

There is no country in the world that has moved from plastic cards to paper licenses. In fact, almost all countries are now shifting from paper to plastic cards because the latter are more durable. The Philippines will be the only country in the world that will go back to paper licenses.

Furthermore, there are environment-friendly and biodegradable plastic cards (PETG) available in the market which would address environmental concerns without sacrificing durability and security. (See such biodegradable card is the UAE's card of the Social Security System (SSS).

The European Union has even issued a directive mandating all EU countries to use plastic drivers' license cards to stop the problems (of fake drivers' licenses made of paper till the states in the US use plastic cards.

There are international ISO standards to ensure that drivers' license cards are fake-proof. Only plastic cards, and not paper cards, are compliant with these standards.

Why are we registering while all other countries are progressing?

2. The TOR for the bidding have a specific supplier for a card printer which is Toppan of Japan because only its model, Image D400, meets the requirements—a clear violation of the Government Procurement Act or RA 9184.

3. The TOR also requires that the cards be made of security paper manufactured by a company that has experience in high security banknotes and passports in the Philippines. That would limit the qualified bidders to only one supplier, Security Paper Co. Inc., which now supplies the paper for the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Human rights: Maximizing P-Noy's UN debut

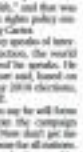
IT TOOK pages on right that President Noynoy Aquino's United Nations speech will focus on nuclear non-proliferation rather than human rights, which he will save a polite support only to advance the interests of overseas Filipino workers and position our nation vis-à-vis the big powers like the United States and China, and our regional other is in the Asean.

Remember during the campaign Gary Aguirre first spoke before the UN General Assembly, she chastised the organization for having remained silent on the human rights abuses during the decade and a half of Marcos rule. Today human rights remains just as important the fundamental and general reasons.

The international protection of human rights promotion is the best way to protect Filipinos—and specifically Filipina—overseas contract workers. We shouldn't be limited to what is at best a symbolic pitch for a UN resolution on the Rights of Migrant Workers. By the nature of the beast, the convention is asymmetrical. It creates obligations for the host or receiving countries, but protects mainly the rights of sending-state citizens as victims of outrage.

In a significant sense, the written convention has lagged behind the unwritten customary law of human rights. It basically replicates all the protections offered by human rights covenants. In other words, what it says is that the host states may not use their domestic law on immigration and the regulation of aliens in order to exclude (while from the protection of law. It will take a very long while for the convention to make any real difference on its own, but pushing for it should send the message that the host and migrant-sending states is not the sole determined fiscal powers.

Moreover, taking up human rights as a cornerstone of Philippine foreign policy helps us capitalize on the unique advantages enjoyed by a P-Noy presidency. Human rights is the issue most identified by his mandate. The rags and wars on the ramparts of the Edsa Revolution's legacy it is a cause that should be bequeathed for P-Noy embedded in his veins. He father was the lead-



Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

ing premier of resistance of the Marcos era, kept in solitary confinement and under psychological torture for seven years. His family stayed in Boston after Cory tentatively recalled us their three years of "normal life," and that was only one of the active human rights policy continued by El Presidente Jimmy Carter.

In other words, when P-Noy speaks of international human rights protection, the world will listen. He knows whereof he speaks. He will be speaking from his home turf. He is one of the rare members of the May 2010 elections, from his native's heart as well.

And for what do the papers say he will focus on? A call for nations to join the campaign against nuclear proliferation. How dare? per the meaning. There is no superpower but all nations. With Bilateral, North Korea and other troublesome states heeding up their nuclear capacities, it is certainly urgent. But it is, given all our problems, rather tepid. Adding the Philippines' voice to that call adds little to its momentum. It's like Iran or Nepal—land locked countries—pontificating on the Law of the Sea. Why have an economic talk about the regulation of the oceans, when they need a passport just to go to the beach? In like manner, why listen to a state like the Philippines position the rightness of nuclear disarmament, when it can't even manufacture soap?

I suspect (and here I merely speculate) that whoever chose the nuclear non-proliferation message was someone who wants to avoid controversy. The engagement in the issues of the day. It languishes a tendency to remain aloof of raging debates without appearing to be non-committal. It shows a longing for the comfort of anonymity by speaking of nonproliferation,

no nuances somehow in the crowd without risk of being accused of not having said anything. Yes, that should communicate it. Say something without saying anything.

I imagine that P-Noy would have plausible grounds to stay away from human rights. The Arroyo government's dismal record on corruption did billings of Baron Mons to divide and of Philippine Airlines to Mamasapano pushed him to follow. Who are we to preach a gospel we have not honored?

But momentarily, shouldn't that be the best argument for P-Noy to take up human rights as his issue? In other words, shouldn't he in fact have the moral authority to speak on it precisely from his disgraceful predecessor? In doing so, wouldn't he likewise position himself to be on the Asean, whose widely wealthy stance on human rights abuses—in Myanmar, for instance—exposes its moral hypocrisy at the altar of nonconference? If the ruling elites in each Asean country are dumbing down the Asean into the lowest common basis of unity, shouldn't human rights provide the most principled barrier to settling the floor? And wouldn't P-Noy's Philippine voice for the Asean voice in the Asean when it comes to human rights, Hosni Mubarak and Aung San Suu Kyi?

Finally, human rights can in fact provide the guiding norm by P-Noy's relations with US Security Council permanent members like the United States and China. We have something to say with these countries. The US has its own interests in projecting its military presence in Asia and the Pacific. It will also need our help in curtailing religious fundamentalist training camps and terrorists in our part of the world. China has its own claims over the Spratly Islands and over much of the South China Sea. When we deal with them, we must make the issue of our normative accord within multilateral fora. In other words, when are dealt with China who have money and more gunships, it shouldn't hurt to have the law on our side.

Comment: pcasian@yahoogroups.com

An ambivalent report

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

THE REPORT of the government committee that investigated the Aug. 23 hostage-taking contains at least parts. The first part covers the sequence of events leading to the bloody climax of the massacre of eight Hong Kong tourists by a disgruntled Filipino policeman who had seized a total of 22 travelers. The second pinpoints the "technical misdeeds" that resulted in the massacre of the rescue effort by the authorities and the police who bungled the effort.

The report is in reality a "white paper" issued by the Incident Investigation and Review Committee headed by Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, dubbed to be independent and fair inquiry into the bloody incident, which gave the administration not a black eye in the international community, to use it said by these standards, the white paper is an timely flawed in at least two aspects: first, its lack of balance and second, its recommendations as to what institutions were culpable and accountable for the flaws.

The first part, the narrative of the sequence of events, is dismal and close to impeccable in its adherence to facts. There is nothing to fault this committee of doing a cunning job for the conduct and diligence in gathering the information. The *second part* is more contentious in regard to its recommendations on who should be blamed for the lapses and what changes, criminal or administrative, in structure should be laid against offending institutions or individuals.

The white paper, issued, titled "Critical Incident," spreads the blame, which is like spraying the landscape with shotgun pellets. Eight critical incidents are cited. These incidents, according to the report, "are those points in the chain of events where the action taken, or the inaction, the omission and decisions made were capable of altering that untoward timing or leading from the Critical Incident which affected the final outcome of the incident."

This brings us to the important issue about balance. Two sets of institutions come under the scrutiny: first governmental institutions, and second, a non-governmental institution—the press. Sure, the report summons as prime targets the Philippine National Police, the Department of Interior and Local Government, and the officials of the City of Manila including Mayor Alfredo Lim. But Major Ides Mirasol who went key members of the Crisis Management Committee. His report holds 11 people responsible for the flaws, mostly public officials, as well as two journalists, Erwin Tulfo and Michael Rogas from Radio 882 Remember (RMN), and television networks ABS-CBN, GMA-7 and TV5.

"The imbalance in the report is manifest in the fact that journalists and radio-TV personalities are being put on the target alongside state institutions and officials. It is hard for the committee to determine the culpability of the journalists and radio-TV networks in light of the fact that while the police and the DILG—officials have powers and duties—refused by law to carry out those duties to emergencies, journalists and news networks are non-official entities, with no powers mandated to them. The journalists are being blamed for their coverage of legitimate news, saying they interfered in the crisis-control police operations, but otherwise ignore the journalistic standards in the course of their coverage of the hostage crisis, nothing in the law says that it is illegal for them to interview hostage-takers.

The right of the press to cover citizen-news flows from the 1987 Constitution which provides strong protection to journalists. Section 7 "encourages the right of the people to information on matters of public concern." Section 4 says "no law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press."

The report reflects the predicaments of the government officials from whom these two sets charges that it tended to relate the press the support.

"While there is no law that directly prohibits contact by journalists with a hostage-taker while the crisis situation is on-going," the report says, "the negotiations and other operations adverse to journalists' presence, among others, that journalists should not, without authority from ground commander, (1) be involved in the incident and (2) act as hostage negotiator."

Lacking grounds for charging the journalists, the report says, "A consultation by the members of involved media and representatives on this happen." It also recommends: "Crisis situations should be reported without becoming part of the event being covered. When the journalist becomes a part of the events, he loses his objectivity and potentially places himself in a position where he might make a moral judgment which may be questionable." This was the case of Michael Rogas and Erwin Tulfo because they became part of the events."

"The conduct of Rogas and Tulfo with the hostage-taker, his cooperation in continuing his interviews ... was a breach of ethical guidelines governing media coverage in hostage-taking crisis situations, potentially endangered lives, and interfered and/or derailed the efforts of authorities to resolve the crisis," the report says. It suggests that such an ethical breach ought be taken to the media self-regulation ethnocide under their ethical codes, which they violated.

It is not clear how this ambivalent report what was the criminal liability of media people or organizations participating in the Quezon Consolidated News.

Karen's vindication

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FORTIETH YEARS ago, on March 29, 1996, Karen Tañada headed the cut of a prominent Davao businessman who had offered to take her abductors and stay with the hostage in exchange for a ransom. The businessman was a leading figure in the Davao Chamber of Commerce, which Karen served as executive director. He felt no reason to distrust the man, especially with another businessman was accompanying him.

Soon after the other man got off the car, the businessman made a detour and drove to a resort where he subsequently raped Karen.

Immediately after the rape and upon reaching home, Karen told her husband about the incident and within 24 hours Karen went to a medical examination to have herself examined. Within 48 hours, she reported the case to the police and filed sworn affidavit against the businessman on April 1. In the 14 years since, Karen has endured a hostile but private court case, due to frequent changes in judges and delays in the prosecutor's handling of the flight of the accused and the latter's subsequent arrest in his frequent hospitalizations. She also has her share of some non-bonafide but real or double her salary "so that there will be no report of the incident," she was told, and she and her two children had to move out of Davao City to escape the harassment and threats to their lives. Karen's career was also rendered unsuitable in Davao, resulted by her community's becoming a permanent citizen of exile. But because her husband's job required that he stay in Davao, they had to commute between Davao and Manila. Her children, parents and siblings had to undergo threats, as did she and her husband. She also found that she could no longer hold down a job, due to the many "flashbacks" she experienced whenever she was in public conveyances.

But Karen never gave up, even after the acquittal of the businessman in 2005. Under Philippine law, heirs and her friends, Evelyn Ganzon, could no longer appeal the verdict, since the businessman was protected against double jeopardy. But if Karen could not find justice under our legal system, she was determined to seek her own version: **disinherited and let struggle.**

* * *

THAT vindication came Karen's way last July 30, during a meeting of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Cedaw), which considered the "communication" submitted by Karen and Evelyn under the Cedaw "Optional Protocol." Under the "Optional Protocol," a woman may bring before Cedaw a complaint of gender-based discrimination, provided she can prove she has exhausted all legal means pursued. Both of these conditions were met by Karen.

In her submission, Karen, among other points, argued that the Philippine government had failed to protect her rights and discriminated against her because the government had failed to enforce the laws against the perpetrator of rape, and tolerated the existence of insufficient and confusing laws on rape. She insisted that judge trying her case based her decision on "myths" that portray women as responsible for rape victims "should" resort, despite expert testimony by psychologists on post-traumatic stress disorder.

In its decision, more properly termed "Views," the Cedaw Committee found that the Philippines violated Karen's rights under the convention. It recommended that the government provide Karen "appropriate compensation commensurate with the gravity of the violations of her rights" and to undertake a list of specific measures to address problems in legislation, rape prosecution and court practices that discriminate against rape victims.

* * *

AUDE Sison Significantly, the Philippines is, in effect, asked to make its legislation conform to the prevailing international jurisprudence on rape, such as, for example, the case of M.C. v. Bulgaria (in the European Court of Human Rights) and the decisions of the ad hoc tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia."

In an e-mail note to friends, Rina points out that Karen's case "is the first one brought before Cedaw's front line, via Pacific and the first one type decided under the Optional Protocol to the Cedaw. The recommended scope of the decision was narrow in simply recommendations, albeit all, and overseeing provisions of the case, including the Women Legal Bureau which provided the legal research and support work for Karen's communication, and advocates for women's rights, saw it as appropriate to proceed that the Cedaw recommendations are implemented.

(The decision is referred to as CEDAW/C/46/D/18/2008 and may be accessed at the website of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/jurisprudence.htm.)

* * *

WHEN Karen's communication was being considered by the Cedaw Committee in New York, the **RED** held a pressure and in Karen's stead her daughter read the statement that Karen had prepared.

The same daughter was only in preschool when the events of March 29, 1996 befell her mother. If the time she appeared in the press conference, she had already graduated from college, law children, adolescence and early adulthood—her formative years—in the absence of her mother's supreme. As mother Karen deserves this belated vindication, as does her daughter, son, husband and all others whose lives were forever changed by that crime.

Beyond the personal implications, honoring Karen's attorney's dedication at the hands of the Cedaw committee bodes well for all other rape victim. Perhaps after this, women who go public with their complaints of rape need no longer prove that they "struggle" hardly and physically with their rapist, or that they led blameless lives before their encounter with the rapist (as with Slayer of the infamous Subic rape case) or that they were not drinking or at bars/clubs from Philippine courts, as well as from police, prosecutors and the public.

'Ri-ka-ru-te'

LOOKING BACK

Anabelle R. Licuanan

SEPTEMBER 30, 1937: "Hiroquichee mag sesagi Filipino-tikas ni Rizalie" was published in "Nihonmas, Japan, in 1937. The inquiry given in "Kaisha Gali." Rizalie's wife was a surname visited by Filipinos traveling in Japan. If one was housekeeper or tend of Japanese race, Kaibun Lavinia on 149 Yamashiro, Yokohama, was the place for Nancy Road and a number with a long title of the Philippine Revolution and centenary of the Philippines-American War.

For a number of years now, I have sought the assistance of the Philippine Embassy in Japan to negotiate with the owner of the building where Rizalie's family lived in order to put up at least a historical marker there. There has been little progress on this project because our contacts in Japan are more interested in Rizal than Rizalie.

Then there is a memorial to "Ri-ka-ru-te" at "Ishimaru Park in Yokohama erected by the Philippines-Japan Friendship Society in 1972. It consists of a block of granite with a relief of Rizalie's profile. It is ironic that when you take a close-up photograph of the Rizalie Memorial there, in background happens to be the golden arches of McDonald's, which explains why for a man who fought long and hard for the Philippines' Independence."

Yokohama was a refuge not only for Rizalie but also for Mariano Ponce whom Rizalie should really be studied because it was visited by his friend Isabelo Tiu on 1900-1903. Ponce, a friend of Rizal, is a fellow Ilocano as a member of the Reform Movement in Spain. He was also a friend of Apolinario Mabini. He wrote some of the first biographies of Jose Rizal and published this in 1912.

It would be relevant for us to dig up stories about other Filipino expatriates in Japan in the 19th century and the early 20th century to provide a historical perspective to the many OFWs in Japan today who live and work there. Many young Filipinos are growing up in foreign lands and it is essential that history be used to give them a sense of their roots in the Philippines.

Regarding Rizalie's stay in Yokohama, we have photographs and some documentary material. We return to the Philippines in December 1902 we know from Philippine National Bank and Bank of Taiwan records.

Rizalie tried to convert the stem cane process sent in the revolution against Spain to use arms against the US and was disappointed that his could not enlist their support. In the stenographic notes of his interrogation he said the following:

Rizalie called on Emilio Aguinaldo a number of times and said, "I represented Aguinaldo for having sworn allegiance to the American government and not having performed deeds, and for having devoted the people and ceased to many deaths. I also explained to him the other rebels had brought me, and that I was not to be blamed and not to appear in the courtroom saying that the people did not accept him were. Lastly, I asked him for a sum of money for my aid and he denied me, claiming he was poor."

Rizalie called on Fr. de Pilar in Pedernosa, Pass. He narrated: "He held a conference which was held many days with me in the house of Fr. Pilar on my pause. Fr. de Pilar has not allowed to finish all asked to accompany me, which I did not accept because I did not trust him, and I advised him to remain in Manila until such time as he should consider the people reconciled."

Rizalie returned to Cebu, Iloilo, Bacolod in Cebu Negros, Santa Cruz, Manila, and they conferred for an hour after which the founding head of Iglesia Filipina Independiente, "advised me to surrender myself, but with the sense of my attitude he told me no to do so that I thought best. Gregorio Aglipay is a relative of mine, a third cousin, a native of my town Bulan, Sorsogon, and I exercise great influence over him because he respects me."

Rizalie's then called on another prominent Ilocano, Isabelo de los Reyes, in Tondo where they "had a long conference during which he tried to dissuade me from my intention for promoting the cessation of the country to me, assuring me the people will not respect. I insisted on my idea and would not let Isabelo de los Reyes convince me. He could not since he remaining in this manner."

Reading the above made me wonder why Rizalie never left the Philippines to join his friend Antonio Luna who had decided to leave Cuba to the Philippines to continue the revolution and the Philippine-American War. He decided not to do this because of his children's education. Maybe these reasons of love were believed in the overnight Filipino Howard Taft and president the Philippines for the promised independence after a short period of training in American-style government.

Rizalie recounted a 20-minute meeting he had with Dr. Dominador Gomez that "Dr. Gomez declared himself surprised at my coming and after having explained the purpose of my visit, he promised to help me in the realization of the purpose of my return from Hongkong, he admonished me to carry the matter effectively without the necessity of shedding blood, the independence of the country would be accomplished in China—if four years elapsed. He said set up the director of the Philippines for Hongkong, but on 1 opposed myself to the proposed to reside he advised me to return to Hong Kong since nothing could be accomplished, saying that the Filipinos would not accept me."

One can only imagine the heartbroken Rizalie felt when nobody seemed interested in fighting for the cause. He would get the opportunity later, when he returned to the Philippines with the Japanese in 1941.

* * *

Comments are welcome: mail to Facebook, Jim Rigs.

Latin neighbors

I HAVE written about the need for Filipinos to learn more about our Asian neighbors. It's not many gains that there and, in ways more so different from our own, as just because we are perhaps the most Americanized nation in this part of the world.

I made "time translated" in two atomic bases. One is the influence of the United States, whose 50 years of colonial exposure in the whose the Philippines left a deep impression. Still we are less conscious though of the other source of "Asian neighbors," which is the influence of Spanish colonialism, filtered through Latin America, namely Mexico.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Whenever I visit a Latin American country, I feel more at home than when I am, say, in Thailand. There's a familiarity with Latin American culture—from the many Catholic churches that dot the landscape, the chaos of street life, even the body language.

Human exchanges

The affinities are not accidental. It's not just a matter of shared Spanish colonialism, but also the many exchanges that took place especially with Mexico through the trade, military and administrative links. One of the most interesting was a "mexicanizing brigade" in the early part of the 19th century, which traveled to Japan with cargoes of children being sent almost with smallpox to become fire carriers and said that agents Mexico to the residents there could be vaccinated. The "mexicanizing brigade" was the first time children were sent from Mexico to move on to the Philippines, as far as the historical records show, those children never arrived in the Philippines.

There were in the past, many more waves of human movement across the Pacific. I still occasionally run into Filipinos who say they have great-grandparents who came in from Mexico, apparently. I also came across Mexicans and more, a Cuban, who say they have a Filipino great-grandparent.

There were all kinds of other cultural exchanges. Many Central American plants—from tomato to kalachuchi—made their way to the Philippines, together with their Nahuatl (one of the Indian languages) names.

In more ways than, we are really part of Latin America, though that we are not in the geographical sense of the term.

Yet, our knowledge of Latin America is filtered through the media of the United States, so we mainly touch close neighbors and poverty. Occasionally, we get to appreciate a bit of culture, mainly through the magic realism novels of Latin American writers like Isabel Allende and Marquez or leaded literature.

The other week I ran into Dr. Ruth Elizalde, a professor at the Ateneo, who told me she was embarking off to some activity in connection with "the Latin America bicentennial," something which I was unaware of. I can remember Sandino with Latin American history and know that there are a series of revolutions that took place in the early 19th century, but I am ignorant from Spain, but until he mentioned this literature, and I had read nothing about these important commemorative events in the local media.

Already and the more media should be doing more to stir up interest in Latin America, since the bicentennial of Mexico started last September 16, and that of Chile on September 18. The biggest commemorations here in the last month, with several Latin American countries celebrating their independence. The first to do this was Bolivia, where Simon Bolivar led the first uprising against Spain in 1809. While Bolivar's government was short-lived, the uprising reverberated throughout the continent.

The last country to celebrate was Mexico on 15, 2010. A Grupo Bicentenario (una grupo bicentenario en ig) has been established with 33 members. Nine countries celebrate their bicentennials in 2009 and 2010: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Paraguay and Venezuela. Curiously, the 10th country is Spain, which comes through almost like a mother counting with her rebellious children.

Spain's inclusion in the Grupo Bicentenario makes sense because the original revolts were actually pro-Spain. In 1808, Napoleon Bonaparte installed and took over Spain, installing his brother, Joseph, as ruler. The creole or mestizo populations in the Spanish colonies revolted against Napoleon but Spanish representatives sent over by the Bonaparte regime.

When a general named Miguel Hidalgo made his famous "El Grito" (the shout, sort of an equivalent to our Aguinaldo Cry of Balintawak) from his pulpit on Sept. 15, 1815, marking the start of the Mexican uprising, it was actually a call for support of the deposed Spanish king.

The uprisings were protracted, and eventually focused on independence from Spain. By 1823, Spain had lost most of her colonies in Latin America, with the notable exception of Puerto Rico and Cuba. By maintaining two possessions, together with another Ibe Hong colony, the Philippines, were tied to the United States in 1898.

Despite our supposed isolation from Latin America, the Philippines continued to share many similarities in the cultural, political and economic spheres through the next 200 years. Like the Latin American countries, we have suffered from the yoke of feudalism that produced wealthy landowning families who have ruled while keeping the peasantry dirt poor. And although the Latin American countries were formally occupied by the US, their economies, and politics, were dominated by the "semicolonialism."

Relationships

Through the 1950s and into the 1970s, the US military involvement in set up elections dictatorial regimes in many of the Latin American countries, with the Philippines being no exception. Many were against its own citizens. The most notorious was the Augusto Pinochet coup on Sept. 11, 1973 in Chile, which included the assassination of its socialist president, Salvador Allende. The 1970s was bloody for Latin democracy—and, across the Pacific, in the Philippines, which was under martial law from 1972 to 1981.

The Latin American historical is more than to continue—a series of 19th-century events. There's a renewed sense of nationalism (a name of three countries, as well exemplified by the US-Chilean miners trapped almost a mile underground for more than a month now), yet still able to look out—ranging the US-dominated southern hemisphere to date.

Social movements have emerged through the last two centuries, some leading even as it did in Mexico, which launched another revolution in 1910. As in the Philippines, Latin-American countries are marked by the cultures of the rich that look very much like North American affluent neighborhoods, yet surrounded by slums where people live in subhuman conditions. Indigenous populations are the poorest among the poor. Yet, there is a renewed sense of the indigenous uprisings, as the most unexpected. It was not until 2005 that Latin America had its first indigenous head of state: Evo Morales of Bolivia.

Argentinian President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner has warned the Latin America investments to call for a "re-founding" of the state emphasizing the protection of human rights and education. Indigenous rights are important. The second among leaders in both government and civil society is quite visibly evident in Bolivia in the Philippines.

* * *

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SC may be forced to issue TRO

THE SUPREME Court might be convinced or compelled to issue a temporary restraining order or status quo order against the Truth Commission (TC) because of an ill-advised statement of President Aquino urging it to start its work despite the pendency of a petition assailing its constitutionality and despite the refusal of the Supreme Court and the government to sell peanuts in oral arguments.

While a TRO was not sought by the Supreme Court when Rep. Edcel Lagman filed his petition against the implementation of the executive order creating the TC, judicial sources demonstrated that the government observed the rules on considering that it was given a very short period of time to comment on the petition and an oral argument was called by the Court.

Practitioners in the Supreme Court would agree that this action by the Court would only mean that it is giving the petition its utmost priority, and that the issue would be decided with immediate dispatch.

LETTERS

Petitioners, there is no need to rush for the implementation of the TC while the petition is under consideration by the Court.

While it is certain the discretion of the government to implement an order or decision could remain by the Supreme Court in the absence of a TRO, there appears to be no urgency in immediately implementing the TC. To direct the TC to start its work at this time may give the impression that the government is trying to pressure the Supreme Court to decide cases to cater to the prejudice of the petitioners because some issues be raised in his petition may then become moot and academic.

—ROMULO MACALINTAL
11 Gagayan Valley St.
Philamlife Village, Las Piñas City

Debt servicing violates 1987 Constitution

I READ with keen interest Bernie Dollago's letter titled "Debt servicing a 'legal' stealing," a term or contraction." (Inquirer, 7/14/10) As Dollago correctly observes, "[a]n automatic debt appropriation remains in place to this day" because of Executive Order 292, s. 1987, which was issued by President Cory Aquino in the exercise of her legislative power under the Freedom Constitution.

Sec. 26 of this EO titled "Automatic Appropriations" explicitly provides in part that "All expenditures for (1) principal and interest on public debt (EO 292) are automatically appropriated x x x." This particular section remains in force in violation of provision (Sec. 31[1] in PD 1177 but it was PD 1177 itself (Sec. 26 of EO 292) that should be repealed, the latter provision being the prevailing law on the matter.

I have always been critical of automatic debt appropriations. Increasing tolerance to more noninstitutional and undemocratic modes (Executive Orders or Resolutions No. 99-44 [adopted Sept. 7, 1999] which embodied OSAs—official position at that time, amid doubts as to the continued applicability and effectivity of PD 1177 (Sec. 28) vis-a-vis the constitutional injunction that "No money shall be paid out of the Treasury except in pursuance of an appropriation made by law" which "shall originate exclusively in the House of Representatives." (Sec. 29[1] and Sec. 24, Art. VI, 1987 Constitution).

It was the OSAs' theory then that PD 1177, by the cutoff, first it automatically appropriated public funds for debt servicing, was deemed inconsistent with the 1987 Constitution pursuant to its Transitory Provision to the effect that only those measures and other executive issuances "not inconsistent with this (1987) Constitution shall remain operative until amended, repealed or revoked." (Sec. 3, Art. XVIII). The inconsistency was demonstrated by the fact that PD 1177 was issued by President Marcos alone and not concurred by Congress and, hence, was not an appropriation law within the contemplation of the Constitution. Nor is it an issuance from the House of Representatives or undergo the legislative process of appropriation mandated by the Constitution, and that being an executive issuance under the regime of martial law, it was never promulgated without the consent of the sovereign people. Given such inconsistency the OSA concluded that PD 1177 ceased to be operative after the ratification of the 1987 Constitution.

To a certain extent, it was the OSAs' position that in order to deny/override both by the 1987 Constitution, Congress should reclaim and reassert its power of the purse by enacting a separate appropriation law providing new releases for debt servicing.

The recent Entry of COA Resolution 09-44 remains the only operational vein to this day and may be leveled as a powerful justification for repealing the automatic appropriations provision in EO 292.

—SARTAGODE C. TERMARE JR.
SAEC Cairo SC,
Pulawan, Abdul-City

'Jueteng' probes: witnesses the only 'casualties'

THE GOVERNMENT'S drive against jueteng will never succeed unless the operations of this illegal numbers game and their protectors are apprehended, prosecuted and convicted.

Recently, the House of Representatives' Blue of Representatives conduct probes purportedly to craft legislation that will curb the proliferation of jueteng and recommend the prosecution of persons found involved.

So far, no lowly have been passed and no one has been charged in connection with jueteng.

On the other hand, so-called whistle-blowers and witnesses at the legislative sessions have become the only casualties in the government's effort to eradicate jueteng.

Notorious jueteng operators and their protectors have remained scot-free and are still around doing business as usual.

Since congressional inquiries are nothing but an exercise in futility and a waste of taxpayers' money, and in particular legislative drive perhaps the Bureau of Internal Revenue can go after jueteng operators and their protectors for unexplained wealth and tax evasion.

At Lupon, the notorious Asiacrest program involved in illegal gambling, prostitution, pornography and other criminal activities for years was able to evade conviction for any of these crimes, but he was eventually sentenced and imprisoned for tax evasion.

—WILLIAM ADAMS SR.
wpadams1111@yahoo.com

People's judgment vs columnist's biased view

Juan Mercado, in his Aug. 6 and Aug. 8 columns, unfairly lambasted former President Joseph Estrada for his role as defense minister in the martial law regime. Mercado dredged up the charges that Estrada's armies and rampant land banditry against the former president for 20 years. Since 1986, the Filipino people have voted Estrada into the Senate three times and once into the House of Representatives. In the latest election last May, he got more than 10 million votes.

Twice Estrada has been elected by his peers as Senate president. The latest was after the May elections, as a result of which he continues to be Senate president today. He garners accolade could a public figure get than the one accorded by the Filipino people in a nationwide election—not once, but three times—and by his fellow senators? Choosing him president of the chamber twice.

This goes to show that the Filipino people have vindicated Estrada, who has been continuously in an election office for more than three decades since his appointment as undersecretary for tourism by President Ferdinand Marcos in 1969. Estrada has never been charged nor convicted of any crime.

In recalling Estrada's role during the martial law years, Mercado was quite biased—he failed to mention that it was then Defense Minister Estrada who ran off the Edsa revolutionists in February 1986 by ordering the withdrawal of support from the Marcos administration following a rigged presidential election. In leading a multi-lay revolt, Estrada risked his life. He let Filipino's sense of senate that led to the proclamation of Corazon Aquino as president and restored democracy to our country.

Even though Estrada was defense minister during martial law in 1986, he was elected by the people of Manila in accordance with the 1973 Constitution, which provided for the people to prosecute abuses against detainees and the political opposition. In fact, he saved many detainees from being physically harassed and abused and brought about their early release. He was also instrumental in restoring democracy in the Marcos dictatorship.

As senator and congressman, Estrada showed his sensitivity and genuine concern for the general welfare. During the 10th and 12th Congress, he authored several laws that benefited ordinary Filipinos, such as those lowering the income tax rates for low-income individuals and exempting public school teachers from paying taxes on their allowances and benefits.

Despite vigorous opposition, the senator was able to manage down increases in electricity bills and also stopped the mass shutting of cell phone services by telecommunications firms. Because of his proven effectiveness in protecting the interests of our people, he was reelected last May and chosen by his peers to again lead the Senate.

I suppose the judgment of our people declaring Estrada innocent from this biased opinion columnist.

—RAMON CORRALES
manila1976@yahoo.com

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Palace review of report dismays De Lima

From page A1

In New York, where he is on a sweltering visit, Mr. Aquino told reporters on Tuesday he was not "100 percent sold" on the committee's report to him last Friday after five days of executive hearings and that was why he had ordered a Palace review.

"I'm not pressuring (already)," De Lima said in a text conference. "What the committee will do now will depend totally on the results of that review by the presidential legal team," she said.

"What the chair of the committee will do next will also depend on the results of that review."

Asked if she was considering quitting, De Lima said, "I don't want to say anything about it."

De Lima admitted that the IRC had requested the Palace to release to the public the entire report to prevent speculations and confusion.

De Lima said that because the Palace did not release the entire report, the IRC was becoming "defensive" with the speculations going around.

"But again we respect the decision of the President to withhold it for now pending the review of the legal team," De Lima said.

"But I have to be candid also of the sentiments of the IRC," she said. "We do not want to be put on the defensive."

"Look at what's happening. So many are criticizing. Many are also speculating because it's not out yet (and released) completely," she added.

Asked if she was surprised by the President's decision, De Lima said: "Medyo (a little bit)."

She said she did not ask Aquino to reconsider his decision to have the IRC recommendation be reviewed because she respected it.

"I could only defer to the decision of the President," De Lima said.

"Ideally, that was the thinking of the committee. That it would have been much better if the (full report had been released) to preclude speculations," De Lima said.

Recommendations withheld

Eight Hong Kong tourists and the hostage-taker were killed during the 11-hour standoff which sparked outrage in China and its southern territory and strained relations between Beijing and Manila.

Only 93 pages of the 44-page report have been posted on the government website, although the entire document was turned over to the Chinese Ambassador in a gesture of appeasement. The section on conclusions and recommendations were withheld from the Philippine public, pending the review by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Edmundo de Jesus.

Asked if she agreed with it, De Lima said: "Well, the committee can not ... you know ... that's the problem when you cannot really publicly express your own (views)."

'It's not fair'

Asked whether the President's decision was ill-advised, she said: "Don't just defer my comments after we receive the results."

De Lima cited allegations that the IRC recommended the prosecution of certain individuals and organizations for personal or political reasons were "very unfair, irresponsible and unbecoming."

"The members of the IRC are also human. We have our own feelings. It's not fair. It's very unfair that certain personalities are imputing illegal personal and even political motives to the work of (IRC)," De Lima said. "That a most ridiculous."

She said the committee did not recommend the immediate prosecution of anyone and only called for the "initiation of appropriate administrative and criminal proceedings" against seven individuals to determine if there was probable cause to go after them.

"It is initiation. It's not direct filing of charges," De Lima said, adding there was one individual that the IRC recommended to be investigated further for administrative liability.

Ombudsman, media

"Of course, we had a very different recommendation for the Ombudsman and her deputy. We also had a very different recommendation for (Commissioner) Michael Aragon, Ferdie Tolle and the dati[former] station manager," De Lima said.

"Of course, we also had a different recommendation for the three networks," she added, referring to ABS-CBN, GMA 7 and TV5.

De Lima said that the committee did not recommend specific sanctions "precisely because the administrative and criminal proceedings would have to be initiated first."

She urged all those concerned—the spines, Chinese government officials and the media—to take time to analyze and make constructive observations about the IRC action, pointing out that the entire report has not even been released.

"We feel that only a full understanding and comprehension of the report will set the proper dimensions of its merits as well as shortcomings," De Lima said.

"We honor there are imperfections in the report. In the first place, we have limitations like time, materials or literature on what came out in the public proceedings."

Second phase

De Lima said that the committee, excluding Local Government Secretary Jesse Robredo, met yesterday morning and discussed what steps to take for the "second phase" of their investigation, which is the "institutional review".

"We are also meeting on adjustments... I think by Monday—on certain points not covered by the report because the corresponding documents came late in the sense that we were already finalizing the report when those documents came," she added.

De Lima said the Ombudsman's planned investigation into the hostage-taking might duplicate the work of the IRC.

She noted that the purported basis of the Ombudsman's case, an Aug. 23 letter from two Hong Kong councilors, asked for information that had already been answered by the IRC inquiry.

"But again, as I said, that is the prerogative of the Ombudsman, especially if it is an independent constitutional body," she added.

De Lima said that issues of "propriety and prudence" would only come in if the Ombudsman would look into her own involvement in the hostage taking.

ELMER CAMAT Justice Secretary Leila de Lima is in a passive mood as she walks beside the bullet-riddled tourist bus during the Sept. 8 reenactment of the bloodbath at a police warehouse in Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan City. De Lima has expressed dismay over the staggered release of the contents of the investigation report and President Aquino's initial reaction to have it released.

SHDA STATEMENT ON THE GA- Pag-IBIG FUND CONTROVERSY

The Subdivision and Housing Developers Association (SHDA) is expressing deep concern over the reported irregularities in the use of Pag-IBIG loan proceeds by a developer in Pampanga. Going by the initial results of the investigation conducted by Vice President and HUDCC Chair Jejomar C. Binay, official pronouncements by Pag-IBIG Fund and press statements of Globe Asiatique, the extent and magnitude of the alleged irregularities cannot be taken lightly. They have seriously affected, not only the housing industry, but also the banking and finance sector as well. SHDA does not condone nor ascribe to such practices and vows to police its ranks so that similar irregular practices will not be committed by its member developers.

The unique loan arrangements and accommodations given to Globe Asiatique by Pag-IBIG Fund, have allowed the apparent laxity in the processing and monitoring of the loan accounts, and eventually led to the massive number of allegedly fraudulent transactions. It is unfortunate that as a result of this controversy, and even if Globe Asiatique is not a member of SHDA, many of our member-developers, who operate under the regular lending windows of Pag-IBIG, are experiencing delays in the processing and take-out of their accounts in various parts of the country.

While we are confident in the continuing financial stability of Pag-IBIG Fund, and the integrity of many of its officers, SHDA is also hoping that the on-going investigation ordered by Vice President and HUDCC Chair and the audit being conducted by the Pag-IBIG Fund management will bear out the full extent of the alleged anomalies and identify those responsible for this fiasco. At the same time, SHDA is appealing to Pag-IBIG Fund to isolate erring developers and differentiate them from the majority who are playing by the rules. We call on Pag-IBIG Fund management to level the playing field in its dealings with developers and be more transparent in the special arrangements made with Globe Asiatique.

SHDA has been working closely with Pag-IBIG Fund for the past ten years, in strengthening the Pag-IBIG Housing Loan Program, and will continue to support Pag-Ibig Fund's efforts to streamline loan processing procedures without sacrificing the integrity of loan accounts. SHDA also believes in the assurances made by the Vice President and HUDCC Chair, in his keynote speech at the SHDA National Developers Convention last week, that *"WE WILL NOT FAVOR ANY DEVELOPER EXCEPT TO AFFIRM THOSE WHO ARE ABLE TO BUILD INTEGRITY INTO THE HOUSES THAT THEY DELIVER, AS MUCH INPUT INTEGRITY IN THE BUYERS THAT THEY PRESENT."* We also fully support the Vice President and HUDCC Chair's efforts to institute reforms in the housing sector, and assure him of our full cooperation in ensuring that these anomalies will not be allowed to happen again. SHDA is also prepared to play an active role in helping the P-NOY administration meet the goals of its housing agenda.

RED ADVT.

Antonio Lino "Tony" Bergonia

Across the NATION

MILF says gov't needs Cha-cha to form sub-state for Muslims

COTABATO CITY—An amendment to the Constitution was needed to accommodate a proposal by the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to create a sub-state in Mindanao through a peaceful settlement of the Moro rebellion on the island.

Mohagher Iqbal, MILF chief negotiator, said the MILF has dropped its pursuit of the proposed Bangsamoro Juridical Entity that was part of the aborted Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) drafted under the Arroyo administration.

In an interview yesterday, Iqbal said the MOA-AD may be dead, "but the concept remains. We will push for it."

This time, however, the MILF is pushing for a sub-state in Mindanao for the Moro people, according to Iqbal.

Iqbal said in the MILF draft, "we proposed an asymmetrical state-sub-state arrangement."

"The government will have to amend the Constitution," said Iqbal.

MEMBERS of the Moro National Liberation Front gather for one of their grand summits in March 2001 to show unity amid a struggle to make the Philippine government honor its commitments in a peace deal struck in 1996. AFP/JEROME ASTIG

Defining powers

He said the powers of the central government and the sub-state would have to be defined in the peace talks.

"We are always optimistic about a sub-state concept because we believe it will address the Moro question," Iqbal added.

To appease critics, Iqbal said those who state that would be placed under the sub-state would be those where there is "Moro majority."

Iqbal said constituents of areas that would form part of the proposed sub-state would be consulted.

"We are confident because those are Moro areas," he said.

He refused to name the areas. Iqbal, however, said the MILF has been backward to give up areas that Moro people have considered part of their ancestral domain.

Modified demand

The MILF's original demand was for a separate state. Through the years, the MILF has modified its demand to cover just several areas in Mindanao.

Peace talks between the government and the MILF were stalled in August 2008 after the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the draft MOA-AD. This later led to attacks on civilian, mostly Christian communities, by MILF commanders.

The MILF is a breakaway group of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), which signed a peace agreement with the government in 1996.

At the opening of the Peace Summit in Sharif Kabunsuan Cultural Center in Cotabato City on Monday, Vice Mayor Muslimin Sema, who represented the MILF as chair of one of its three factions, said although the MILF is not opposed to the peace process with the MILF it wasn't optimistic about a peace pact with its erstwhile rival group.

"What other solution then can be laid down on the negotiating table?" Sema said.

Another solution

Answering his own question, Sema said the only solution, as far as the MILF is concerned, is to enhance the autonomy that is already in place, referring to the five provinces, one city autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

But MILF vice chair for political affairs Ghazali Jaafar, in an interview also yesterday, said the MILF doesn't see the expanded ARMM as a solution.

"The ARMM failed to address the Moro problem. Self-determination of the Bangsamoro people is the key to peace in the Moro homeland," Jaafar said. Alex Alconaba and Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

DENR resumes titling, survey of Boracay lots

By Nestor F. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has resumed the process of titling lots on Boracay Island after the Aklan Regional Trial Court (RTC) dismissed a petition to nullify a presidential declaration categorizing most of the island as government property.

Abraham Abaska, Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (Cenro) of Boracay, said in a telephone interview on Monday that the DENR has resumed the survey of lots and the processing of application for Forest Land Use Agreement for Tourism Purposes (FLAgT) after the Aklan RTC Branch 2 dismissed a civil case filed by some owner J. King & Sons and Co. Inc. against the government.

Arroyo law

In the ruling, issued by Judge Ledelia Amparo-Pelleren on Aug. 18, the court dismissed the petition filed on May 14, 2008, to declare as invalid and unconstitutional Presidential Proclamation No. 1064 issued by former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on May 22, 2006.

The proclamation classified 628.96 hectares, or 60.98 percent of the 1,032-hectare island, as alienable and disposable on the premise that the entire island is government property.

The Supreme Court had already affirmed the legality of the proclamation on Oct. 8, 2008, and also dismissed appeals by some property claimants who earlier expressed fears of losing their land on prized lots on the island.

The Aklan RTC denied a petition to stop the implementation of the proclamation and lifted a 30-day temporary restraining order issued in

Abaska said DENR received 16 applications for a FlagT, which covers areas categorized as forest land.

15-year lease

A DENR order said a FlagT, which has the effect of a temporary land title, allows the temporary use, occupation and development of any forest land for tourism purposes for a period of 15 years renewable for another 25 years.

Lot claimants who would be granted a FlagT would be charged an annual rent equivalent to 5 percent of the zonal value of the land area and a one-time performance bond worth twice the annual zonal, said Lord Orcine, DENR regional technical director.

The DENR, through a private survey firm, is also completing a cadastral survey of the categorized as alienable and disposable.

Abaska said at least 3,000 lots, mostly in Barangays Yapak and Balabag, have been surveyed.

These types of titles would be available—homestead patents for alienable, disposable areas or residential free patents for residential areas and sales patents for commercial areas.

Only about a third of lots in Boracay have titles while the rest are covered by tax declarations.

Chances of quick solution to killings slim, says study

BAGUIO CITY—James Balao, one of the founders of an indigenous peoples rights organization, has been training for the last two years since his abduction in La Trinidad, Benguet, on Sept. 17, 2008.

Balao's mother, Ana, died in June this year while his father, Ardian, died in August. They passed away not seeing or knowing what happened to Balao, who helped found the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA), and Jude Dugay, secretary general of the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA).

Balao's case may soon be counted among the 22 percent of unsolved cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances cited by a report that explores how the judicial process fares in curbing this phenomenon.

ACTIVISTS rally against extrajudicial killings. A study shows that to solve five years for every judicial killing cases to start trial. ALEXIS ROMERO/INQUIRER RESEARCH

"To some, extrajudicial killings [are] an expedient way of curing insurgency..."

The report on Philippine extrajudicial killings from 2001 to 2010, including the first five years of the Arroyo administration, showed that the conviction rate for extrajudicial cases turns up to only 1 percent and the number of killings and disappearances continues to increase.

The report, released by lawyers of Parents Who Have Disappeared by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and The Asia Foundation, it was sent to the Supreme by the Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center.

Barreiro said there are already eight cases of extrajudicial killings in the first 30 days of President Aquino's term.

More troubling for survivors of the disappeared is the truth that the "legal process takes too long," because each case "takes an average of five years, two months and 11 days for a case to undergo the entire process," said Barreiro, an editor of the Philippine Law Journal.

His report included an audit of all cases of extrajudicial killings that reached the courts.

It said prosecution could improve once policymakers, lawmakers and human rights advocates shift their approach to extrajudicial killings from an ideological conflict to a fight against injustice.

"To some, extrajudicial killings [are] an expedient way of curing insurgency. To others, it might be a way of implementing the people's justice ... The paradigm is not Left versus Right. It is not the military versus the rebels. It is not democracy versus communism. It is justice versus injustice ... It is with this clarity that policymakers must act, side by because government's full support is enshrining it," he said.

The Philippines has documented 206 cases of disappearances and killings from 2000 to 2010, but only 159 cases were cleared for prosecution, due to poor until it said 95% of these cases are never actually prosecuted in court.

Once a case reaches the trial stage, it took an average of three years, seven months and 25 days for trial to be completed. Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

San Fernando wins 'Oscars' of governance

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A global firm helping organizations implement strategies has indicated seven top performers in the Asia-Pacific region, including the city government of San Fernando, into its Hall of Fame.

This city joined the "Palladium Balanced Scorecard Hall of Fame for Executing Strategy" on Wednesday, making it one of the world's best-managed organizations, according to the Institute for Solidarity in Asia (ISA) that has been helping cities practice the performance governance system.

A balanced scorecard is a popular corporate tool that measures performance in the strategic plans to help managers forecast potential consequences.

The awards were given by Palladium Group, a management consultancy organization that ascribes the best world corporate strategies which use the scorecard model.

The first Philippine city to make it to that Hall of Fame was Iloilo City.

Other awardees

Another Philippine organization, the Lopez family-owned First Philec Solar Corp., was also inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Dr. David Norton, founder and president of Palladium Group, presented the award in cases held at Bulfed Philippine Plaza.

Mayor Oscar Rodriguez said the award belongs not only to the city but also to the Philippines.

"Our local leaders, city hall employees and private sector leaders have shown that we Filipinos are really capable of excellence," Rodriguez said.

2009 audit

The city government earned the award after a 2009 audit by ISA showed it grew and profited from a certified model for public-private partnership, legislative-executive dialogue and cooperation, establishing mechanisms for the improvement of business processes, effective & consistent planning and revenue generation, urban planning, social equity and civil service performance. Annette Ortdas, Inquirer Central Luzon

DAVID Norton (second right), founder of Palladium Group, hands over to Mayor Oscar Rodriguez of the City of San Fernando an award declaring the city part of the Hall of Fame of the group's best-managed organizations list.

FALLOUT FROM EXPOSÉ

Baguio reaffirms antigambling policy

BAGUIO CITY—The sentinel controversy on "jueteng" and Small Town Lottery (STL) brought this city, whose mayor was linked to the gambling rackets, to reaffirm its no gambling policy.

The city council is launching its own inquiry into allegations that Mayor Mauricio Domogan was involved in jueteng here.

Applications to operate STL have ceased and the council is no gambling policy taken by the city council in 2002, when it dominated bids to operate STL.

Some councilors on Wednesday drafted another resolution reiterating the no gambling policy that covers even state-sanctioned gaming operations, after retired Archbishop Oscar Cruz implicated Domogan at a Senate hearing. Domogan had denied Cruz's allegations.

Council records showed the city government had blocked all forms of gambling, including the social welfare projects of STL, the regional lottery and draw 2 ball, and attempts to open a Baguio casino.

Domogan was mayor in 2008 when the city council supported a government directive for bet things 2 ball to happen.

Councilor Elmer Lourdes Tabanda said the council was applying Resolution No. 201 of 2008 where it an an three applications. The resolution, approved by former Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr., rejects proposals to operate the STL, and compels the council against acting on STL applications.

But the council scheduled an en banc discussion on the new STL application next week, Tabanda said. "I fear this would lead to a diminished client handling pursuing," she said.

Instead of an early probe, Tabanda introduced a proposed measure reaffirming the city's antigambling policy, which was made as a condition for the privatization of Camp John Hay in 1994.

She said the council and the public had fought to maintain this "no gambling" stand.

The policy was tweaked when Council leaders objected to a proposed casino inside Camp John Hay in 2008.

The antigambling stance was cited when the council declared that state lottery was an "unwelcome" presence in Baguio through Resolution No. 226 of 2009.

Tabanda said the policy was weakened when the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. asserted their national franchises to open governments own gambling in Baguio.

In 2008 and 2009, Benguet shut down several keno outlets for not securing business permits.

In Pangasinan, provincial government officials issued a manifesto on Wednesday that expressed indignation over "sweeping and unfounded accusations" linking their governor, Amado Espino III, to jueteng.

The manifesto was signed by Vice Gov. Jose Ferdinand Calimlim and 15 provincial board members.

"We realize that the best way to vindicate yourself is to raise the living conditions of the people and to create more employment," said the councilors. —*Vincent Cabreza and Gabriel Carolinesca, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

SERENITY
Mt. Mayon is a picture of serenity early morning of Sept. 23.

NEWSBRIEFS

LUCENA CITY

Top rebel captured

POLICE said a ranking communist guerrilla in Quezon, who had raided jail in 2008, was captured on Wednesday.

The rebel, Gemma Cang alias "Wenger, Lucy" and "Cindy," was arrested with a carbine, Virgie Rasay, said to be another guerrilla, according to Senior Supt. Elmore Velasquez, Quezon police chief.

They were arrested in a village in Sariaya past 1 p.m. in a joint police and military operation.

Police said the trio were heads of a New People's Army (NPA) unit in charge of collecting so-called revolutionary taxes.

Cang was one of seven prisoners in the provincial jail who escaped with the help of guerrillas in a raid on the jail in October 2008.
Nelle Wallet, Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY

NPA kills SK chair

NEW PEOPLE'S Army guerrillas gunned down the chair of the Sanggunang Kabataan in a village in Pandan, Catanduanes, on Monday, the Army said.

Maj. Harold Cabreros, spokesperson of the 9th Infantry Division, said the body of Jay Carlo Carmelotes, 29 was found on Tuesday. It bore bullets wounds and multiple gunshot wounds.
Ray M. Wenal, Inquirer Southern Luzon

DAVAO CITY

Doppler radars used soon

SITE SURVEYS in Mindanao will soon use Doppler Radars to track typhoons more accurately.

Jerry Pedrico, director of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) for Southern Mindanao, said the radars would be installed in Pagasa in Surigao del Sur and Tampakan in South Cotabato.

Other radars would be installed in Subic, Tagaytay, Baler, Catanduanes, Iloilo City and Cotabato City.

Doppler's measure not only wind velocity but also volume of rainfall.
Jody Baroc, Inquirer Mindanao

SUBIC BAY

Skydiving feast in Subic

MORE THAN 100 skydivers from all over the world are expected to take part in the first mass skydiving event in the Philippines in November aimed at introducing Subic Bay transport as a skydiving destination.

Dubbed as the 1st Philippine Parachuting Phun Festival, the world-class skydiving event will run from Nov. 8-20 and would involve skydivers from the United States, Canada, Europe and the Philippines.

The event is being organized by Sheldon Rex, a Canadian national who serves as operations manager of Adrenaline Blast Adventures at the Subic Beach Resort in Barangay Cly, in partnership with Exotic Sky Adventures from Lumpo.

Brendan Hastie-Arendt, like YES! and Adventure, would be used in the skydiving festival.

LAGUNA

Robbers take P1.1M

THREE GUNMEN in motorcycle took off with P1.1 million in cash from an employee of a money-changing kiosk in a highway robbery in San Pablo City on Monday, police said.

Supt. Ferdinand de Castro, city police chief, said Melody Ilustrisimo, cashier of Cash Bank, in San Pablo City, had just withdrawn cash from another bank when two vehicles was stopped by the gunmen.

Supt. De Castro said one of the suspects was identified as Mark Abbatoirs, who was arrested on another robbery case, but is out on bail.
Marlon Cruz, Inquirer Southern Luzon

TUGUEGARAO CITY

5 dead in collision

FIVE PERSONS were killed while two others were injured early Thursday when their van collided with a 10-wheel truck on the national highway in Barangay Pagutan in Enrile, Cagayan, police said.

Senior Insp. Rodolfo Ramos identified Dalvadon Domingo Benedicto de Leon and Benedicto Robles, all passengers of the van.

The truck driver, Florentino Felipe, was arrested.
Ellanor Fabro, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Tacloban mayor shuts door to STL, numbers games

By Jury Gabieta
and Jhunrex Magallanan
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—Tacloban Mayor Alfred Romualdez has shut the doors to the government-run Small Town Lottery (STL) in the city, saying no numbers game would be allowed to operate in the city as long as he was mayor.

He said allowing numbers games to proliferate in the city would only encourage people to become lazy and unproductive.

Romualdez said he ordered police to crack down on illegal numbers games.

The city police has admitted that the illegal numbers game "swertres," named after the legal numbers game of the same name, operates in Tacloban.

Ms. Bella Rosales, police information officer, in an earlier interview, said authorities were aware of the operations of cockfights in the city and that have taken steps to stop it.

While the mayor has a standing order for police to stop illegal gambling, Romualdez said it was not a "priority."

"I don't think the existence of these numbers games in Tacloban is that serious. We are giving more focus on solving big or heinous crimes," said.

Eleanor Samar Rep. Ben Evardone named a challenger in Philippine National Police Director Leonard Raul Bacalso in lawsuit a "no nonsense" campaign against illegal numbers games like jueteng and cockfights.

"Other types of illegal gambling are rampant in the Visayas and Mindanao, including masiao, last two and daily double. Obviously the PNP must work double time to put a dent in the jueteng racket," Evardone said in an e-mailed statement on Sunday.

The Central Visayas police said it was still reviewing the list of gambling hotspots just sent to the Senate.

Sta. Ana Chief Insp. Reynaldo Pelaez, director, refused to confirm or deny if hosting protector Wesley Sabel's name was on the list, submitted to the Senate by Senator Pimentel.

Going said while the regional police keeps a list of reports of gambling hotels, this may be top validated and is still confidential.

Spider fights emerge as new illegal game

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Police have their hands full cracking the collection and players of "jueteng," Small Town Lottery (STL), "bookies," card games and video karera.

Of late, police have also been after spider derby which appeared to be the latest craze among gamblers in some towns and cities in the region.

The game is played right on the street, as policemen in Dinalupan City found out.

On Sunday morning in Wood house Street and Cuny Road in Barangay Gordon Heights in Dinalupan City policemen arrested 15 people, who included five minors, a report in the regional police camp here showed.

"We thought [the suspects] were playing cara y cruz in connection [because they were holding]

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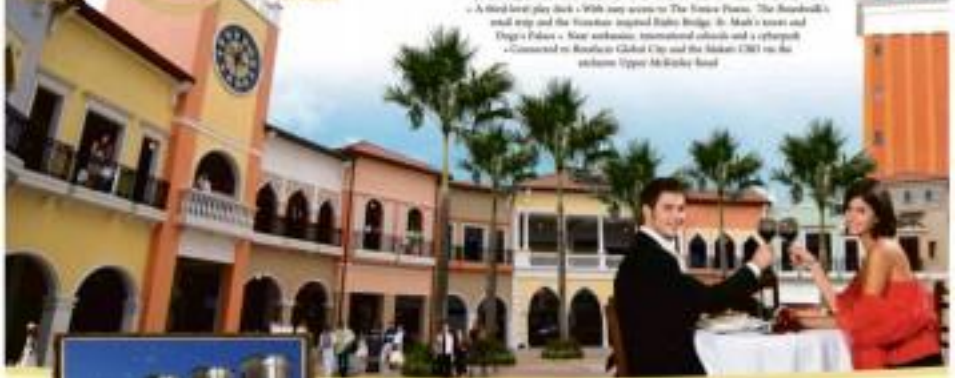

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QC demolition snarls traffic on Edsa

Stone-throwing between residents, wrecking crew leaves several injured

By Nancy C. Carvajal

ROCKS rained on the northbound lane of Edsa and halted traffic on the busy thoroughfare for several hours as thousands of illegal settlers in Sitio San Roque, Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City, thwarted a demolition team's effort to tear down their shanties yesterday morning.

As both sides threw stones at each other, several people were injured, including two policemen, some residents and members of the demolition crew and reporters photographer Rudy Lorena.

At around 1 p.m., a section of the thoroughfare was strewn with wooden barricades and rocks, five hours after the standoff began, with traffic diverted to smaller, unpaved streets.

"There was intense rock-throwing and scuffles. Some of my men were slightly injured," Senior Supt. Benjamin Magalong, head of the 300-member riot police deployed in the area, told MPD.

The policemen who were outnumbered were held back by a hail of missiles as they attempted to disarm the protesters, while water cannon blasts also failed to disperse the crowd, according to MPD photographers at the scene.

The residents stood on the road with arms linked, their belongings stacked in the middle of Edsa.

By noon, the largely unarmored demolition crew was forced to stop their work in the area. Some of them took cover behind cop trucks and threw them back at residents.

Some 4,000 families live on the 340-hectare South Triangle property which is owned by the National Housing Authority (NHA). The government agency wants to develop the lot into the Quezon City Business District in partnership with a private firm.

However, Quezon City Regional Trial Court Judge Branch 226 Ma. Luisa C. Quijano-Padilla said the demolition was premature.

"There should have been no demolition in deference to a court hearing tomorrow [Sept. 24]," she said in a lawyer representing the NHA during a hearing on the allegations on the urgent petition for a temporary restraining order (TRO) filed by residents.

She also issued a TRO which according to her would remain in effect until the hearing today.

Senior Insp. Celso Dennis of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) said the demolishing team was supposed to pull out when residents in the area tried to stop the demolition team from tearing down shanties.

Several policemen who were hired up on Edsa to keep the peace also ended up being targets, he added.

The demolition team, however, managed to tear down 70 houses before they were forced to pull back.

Dennis, who suffered a cuts to his eye during the farmland when he tried to stop the wrecking and demolition crew from trading flying missiles, said they were forced to abandon Edsa, particularly the area from Quezon Avenue to Trinoma mall, to protect motorists and commuters.

As a result, buses and private vehicles were stuck in traffic for at least four hours, all the way to Edsa-Ortigas intersection.

"I had to walk for several blocks because the bus I was riding in was forced to take another route," Wisdom Barrocca, a teacher at Quezon City Elementary School, told the Inquirer.

She added that a grandmother and her two-year-old grandson were also forced to get off the bus and walk.

"I pity the old woman because she had to

go across it very a.m.

Parricide raps filed vs husband of Ruby Rose

By Beverly T. Mativilol

PARRICIDE charges were filed against the husband of Ruby Rose Barrocanda-Jimenez in the Malabon-Navotas Regional Trial Court (RTC), six months after the Department of Justice included him as one of the accused in the case.

Manuel Jimenez III now joins his father, lawyer Manuel Jimenez Jr., and four others as one of the suspects in the murder of his wife.

The Malabon-Navotas RTC said the Justice department filed the charges on Sept. 13, amending the criminal information pertaining to the Barrocanda Jimenez murder.

The court is still scheduled to formally admit the additional charges in a court hearing set on Oct. 1.

Jimenez Jr. and his brother Lope Jimenez, along with four others, were originally tagged as principals by state prosecutors in the conspiracy to kill Barrocanda-Jimenez when they filed the murder charges against the suspects in August 2009.

On March 1, then Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera removed Lope from the list of the accused and added Manuel Jimenez III instead as a co-conspirator in the case.

Jimenez III's inclusion as a co-conspirator had been a bittersweet victory for the Barrocanda family who asked the DOJ to remove Lope's name in the list of accused.

QC demolition snarls traffic on Edsa

From page A12

...ency low grumbles when he got tired from walking," Jimenez said.

The MMA, meanwhile, said it moved quicker in some 2,000 residences on Sept. 16 that they had seven days to vacate their houses.

It added that it would relocate the displaced families to Bedrijanz, Pilot.

In a statement, the NHA said that it had already relocated some 3,000 families to the new site where they were provided houses and P6,800 in relocation assistance.

It claimed that it had conducted dialogues with the residents who remain in the North Triangle property through the NHA Project Interagency Committee whose members include the Commission on Human Rights, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Presidential Commission on the Urban Poor and the city government, among other agencies.

Some residents, however, were not keen on moving to Pilot.

A PORTION of Edsa is turned into a battle ground by residents of North Triangle, Quezon City (left) and members of a demolition team who hurl stones at each other.

"We admit that we do not earn the kind but we want a relocation site which is not too far away from where we work," a woman told a radio reporter in Filipino.

"We want a place where we can earn a living as well," Lucia Velarde, the leader of the residents, told the Inquirer. With Tina G. Santos and AFP wire report

MMDA to honor 'Ondoy' heroes, victims

By Tina G. Santos

A MINUTE for nine to serve as a reminder of the heroism and resilience of Filipinos in times of crisis will be installed near the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority office in Makati City, the agency announced yesterday.

The unveiling of the marker on Monday, Sept. 27, will be the highlight of the agency's commemoration of the destruction wrought by Tropical Storm "Ondoy"—three years after it struck Metro Manila on Sept. 26 last year.

The event will be preceded by a memorial Mass to be celebrated by Manila Archbishop Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales.

MMDA Chair Francis Tolentino said the marker is a fitting reminder of the selflessness of Filipinos during times of calamities.

The event, dubbed as "Ondoy 1 A.D. (After Disaster)," will also feature an audio-visual presentation of the tragedy and damage wrought by the storm a year ago.

Tolentino said the event is aimed at paying tribute to the stories of people who died due to the calamity while honoring the thousands of volunteers who helped in the clean-up operations.

"It is just proper to give our respects to the casualties and express our gratitude to those who provided selfless assistance during those trying times. They prove that 'bayanihan' still exists in our country," Tolentino said.

Among those invited to the event are former MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, his wife and former Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando, Mayors Alfredo Lim Sr. of Mandaluyong, Robert Rodriguez of Pasig, Del de Guzman of Marikina, and Jaime Hardina of the municipality of Pateros. These areas were among the hardest hit by Ondoy.

During a short program, Tolentino will talk about the agency's various flood control programs and projects aimed at eradicating flooding in Metro Manila.

"The experts all agree that climate change is inevitable and its effects are irreversible, but we can at least try to lessen the impact and the damages by doing something to protect and preserve our environment now," Tolentino stressed.

Meanwhile, the MMDA is also inviting the public to send through e-mail remarks/photos/graphic Ondoy photographs which can be used by the agency in its week-long photo exhibit which will start on Monday.

METROBRIEFS

Man kills self using son's gun

AN ILONG cop apparently shot and killed himself in Manila on Wednesday night using his colleague's son's service firearm. Lorenzo Victoriano, Sr., of Brgy. Zone 6 in Tondo, was declared dead on arrival by attending doctors at Ospital ng Maynila. A gunshot wound on the victim's head, police said. Elmer Ramos of the Manila Police District homicide section said that more than an hour before the killing himself, the elderly Victoriano asked his son, PSI Dominic Victoriano, to buy him some medicine for his hypertension. The policeman, who had just come home from work, changed his clothes, locked his firearm caliber .45 in its cabinet and handed the key to his mom and then left. He said that when the policeman returned with his father's medicine at around 10:30 p.m., he was informed by neighbors that they had just heard a gunshot coming from his house. The policeman ran up the stairs and found his father with a gunshot wound on the temple. He also found the gun on the floor and noticed that the drawer where he had placed his gun. The son investigator said that the victim had been suffering from rheumatism, hypertension and diabetes before he killed himself. The police also said that for the past days, his father had been aloof toward him but he paid no attention to this, attributing it to the elderly man's ailments. The victim's body was brought to a funeral home by his family and a police probing while PO2 Richard Ian Urbiztondo was subjected to a ballistic test. Jeannette I. Andrade

Fire hits abandoned building in Pasay

A FIRE of still undetermined origin hit an abandoned building in Pasay City yesterday afternoon. According to FO3 Rodolfo Bañaga, Jr., the fire started at 1:30 p.m. and reached the first alarm status. No casualties were reported. Bañaga said the fire broke out in the ground floor of a two-storey building on a compound along C. Jose Street, Barangay 64, Pasay City. He said the compound was being used as a parking lot for dump trucks. No one was reported injured in the incident. Damage, which was put at P100,000. Ma. Elena L. Bautista

Sister wins estafa case vs brother

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A MANILA court convicted yesterday a man for defrauding his own sister 13 years ago of some P600,000 through the sale of a house and lot he had sold earlier to another sibling.

Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 8 Judge Felixberto Olalia Jr. found Romeo del Rosario guilty of estafa (misdirect) and sentenced him to a minimum of 10 years in prison to a maximum 12 year-jail term of reclusion temporal.

Del Rosario, who was convicted in absentia, was likewise ordered by the judge to pay Rosario Ocampo del Rosario P300,000.

Based on court records, Del Rosario sold his sister a house and lot on Pedia Street in Tondo for P300,000 on June 2, 1997, after making her believe that he owned the property.

Olalia gave him a down payment of P180,000, after which a deed of sale was executed between her and her brother agreeing that the full payment would be given only after her sister's North, the original occupant, had vacated the property.

The complainant later discovered that her sister had already sold the lot to Nena in 1999, although the title to the property remained in Romeo's name.

Olalia told the court that she made the discovery when she asked Nena to visit the property, but was shown a deed of absolute sale executed in 1989 by her brother and sister.

Olalia later charged her brother with estafa in court.

Olalia said the prosecution was able to prove that the accused made representations that he was the owner of the property in question.

Del Rosario, although convicted by the court, is still at large and remains the subject of an arrest warrant issued by Judge Olalia for his failure to attend the trial after the arraignment.

ANTI-FLOODING DRIVE
A city employee/worker removes garbage and dirt clogging a drainage system on Roxas Boulevard in Manila. LEANDRO ALZONA

"I feel healthier and younger at the age of 41. Thanks to Zunic!"
- Myrna, Engineer

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34 in recruitment scheme face raps for fraud

By Tina G. Santos

THIRTY-FOUR persons, including three foreign nationals, were charged Tuesday for allegedly defrauding at least 18 jobseekers, mostly nurses, of P500,000 each, in exchange for high-paying jobs in the United Kingdom.

Charged with syndicated and large scale illegal recruitment and estafa in the Makati Prosecutor's Office were Timothy Makolah Sanpaisit, 33, and Sirinee Boonsa Mead, 36, both Filipino citizens, and Thai national Bhumdee Nyamul, 33, and the Philippine staff of the employment agency International Student Advisors (P) Inc. (ISAI).

The suspects were arrested by operatives of the Anti-Transnational Crime Division of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group during an entrapment operation in their office at Mercedes Building, Esteban Street, Makati District, Makati City.

Senior Supt. Gilbert Sosa, chief of the CIDG-ATCD, and several other officials and employees of ISAI are still at large, including the owners, Philip Leonard, a British national, and his wife, Bernalyn Nacionales-Leonard.

Also named respondents were officials and employees of Sutra and Shirt Video Editing Inc. and Philip Leonard Learning Center Inc.

Sutra and ISA, Pasco and Shirt Video Editing Inc. and Sir Philip Leonard Learning Center Inc. serve as one-stop shops for illegal recruitment activities of the respondents through a student visa scheme.

Under its Securities and Exchange Commission registration, the company is only limited to providing advisory and marketing consultancy services for training college and university courses to foreign countries.

However, on their official website, the firm reportedly offers various short courses leading to nurses and health care professionals in the UK on a "Study and Work" program.

Many of the complainants said they applied for on-the-job training offered by the company because it promised big salaries for nurses and caregivers in the UK.

Each was required to pay amounts ranging from P300,000 to P600,000.

A certification with the POEA showed that the respondents and ISA were not authorized to recruit and deploy workers abroad.

Woman abducted, raped in van by 3 men

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A 25-YEAR-OLD woman working for a ride-sharing Quezon Province was abducted and then sexually assaulted by three men inside a van and then repeatedly raped inside a house in Quezon City at dawn on Wednesday.

Senior Insp. Cora Sandoval, head of the women's desk of Quezon City Police District Station 10 in Fairmeadows, said one of the suspects, Jansen Ray Bonifacio, 22, and driver of the van with plate number ZFF-582, was arrested later in his house in Fairview.

The suspect was positively identified by the victim, Sandoval said. The victim's cell phone and P700 was also taken from her by the men before the van dropped off Mindfulness along Commonwealth Avenue.

Bonifacio, who was charged with abduction, rape and robbery in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, denied the accusation.

Sandoval said they were able to trace the van used by the suspects because the victim's sister, who was with her when she was abducted, had jotted down the vehicle's plate number.

The van was found under the name of Bonifacio's mother. A blanket reportedly owned by the victim was also found inside the vehicle, Sandoval said.

DID YOU KNOW

MORE than 65,000 persons were employed in late 2008 as accommodation establishments catering to tourists in Metro Manila during the first five months of 2010, according to the Department of Tourism. Of this number, 11,161 were regular employees while 4,881 were seasonal employees.

Rafe Pattugalan
Inquirer Research

Woman asks for help for ailing 11-year-old daughter

By Santiago R. Alvarezon

ARDI dela Cruz has been confined since June 30 at the University of Santo Tomas Hospital due to stage 4 non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Her mother Mary Jane said the hopeless that her 11-year-old daughter underwent chemotherapy last month.

Ardi is scheduled to undergo another session soon. Each session costs P30,000.

"If there are no signs of improvement again, she'll have to undergo radiotherapy as her doctor advised," Mary Jane, who is raising this single-handedly told the hopeless in Filipino.

Mary Jane admitted that she doesn't know how expensive the treatment would be. She added, however, that she was determined to cry over filling to save her daughter's life.

"Can you help in find people who'll support to cure the cancer? She has already lost so much weight," the former lady guard said of Ardi.

Mary Jane's contact number is 0921-9951742. Donations can be deposited in her MetroBank account (account no. 152 01520464951).

ARDI dela Cruz

8 killed in Afghan crash were Americans

EARLY ...All nine soldiers killed in the worst helicopter crash for the coalition in Afghanistan in two years were Americans, the Pentagon has confirmed without providing further information on why the aircraft carrying them spiraled to the ground.

Nato said there were no reports of enemy fire in a rugged area in the Daychopan district of Zabul province, where Tuesday's crash took place.

But Taliban spokesperson Qari Yousuf Ahmadi told The Associated Press by telephone that insurgents shot down the helicopter. The Taliban often exaggerate their claims and sometimes take credit for accidents.

The US defense department released the identities of the troops late Wednesday saying four were with the Navy special forces—three of them Navy SEALs—and the rest were soldiers.

Fort Campbell's spokesperson Rick Haapka said that the five soldiers were assigned to the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade.

Tuesday's crash was the deadliest since May 2006, when a Chinook helicopter went down while transporting a nighttime landing on a small snowcapped mountain in eastern Kunar province, killing 19 US soldiers.

Aircraft are used extensively in Afghanistan by both Nato and the Afghan government forces to transport and supply troops because the terrain is mountainous and roads are few and primitive.

Lacking shoulder-fired missiles and other sophisticated weapons, the Taliban rely mostly on machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades to fire at aircraft during takeoffs and landings.

Most helicopter crashes in the country have been accidents caused by maintenance problems or factors such as dust. AP

Editorial ignites a beleaguered Mexico

MEXICO CITY—A newspaper's stunning, front-page editorial of morning surrender to drug lords has set off a national debate from the presidential palace to dinner tables over the worst crisis to engulf Mexico in the modern era.

"What do you want from us?" El Diario de Juarez asked the cartels whose war for control of the border city across from El Paso, Texas, has killed nearly 3,000 people—including two El Diario journalists...in less than two years. "You are currently the de facto authorities in this city... Tell us what you expect from us as a newspaper?"

For many Mexicans, it was a voice that finally exposed in a very public and visceral way the intimidation felt across the country.

"We weren't speaking directly to (drug gangs). It was an open message," El Diario director Pedro Torres said in one of dozens of interviews since the editorial appeared on Sunday. "We wanted to provoke a reaction that would call attention to what's happening in Juarez, and in the end, I think we met our objective."

The editorial dominated headlines and talk shows for two days, and Torres said he received calls from as far as Russia and Japan.

The editorial also brought a welter of accusations of collusion and incompetence between governments and media, whose adversarial relationship is still evolving a decade after the end of tight controls under Mexico's single-party rule.

And it exposed the disillusionment Mexicans who once died with violence daily and those who live in quieter parts of the country for whom little has changed since President Felipe Calderon launched an offensive against the cartels in late 2006.

"There are many parts of the republic that don't want to understand that things have changed a lot for some people... into a state where they've lost control," said Jose Carreno Carlon, a journalist and professor who headed media relations for former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

"There are cases of journalists who are pressured by criminals—who have to consider their words, who have to address the de facto authorities every day."

CALDERON

The editorial could be a turning point for Mexicans, pushing them to navigate the corruption and forces on freedom of expression in a country considered the most dangerous in the Americas for journalists, according to the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

El Diario captured a feeling of helplessness that resonates nationwide, said newspaper editor Jose Martin Moreno Lozano, who has finished coverage of organized crime since his car was torched in 2008 as a threat.

"This is something unusual," he said. "I see it as a call to the people...a call to awaken society to what's happening in our country."

With last week's killing of El Diario photographer Luis Carlos Santiago, 23, a total of 65 news workers have been slain since 2000, according to Mexico's National Commission on Human Rights.

They include Armando Rodriguez, El Diario crime reporter who was gunned down in 2008 as he was taking his daughters to school.

The federal investigators in the case also was assassinated and there are no leads.

Calderon met with representatives press groups on Wednesday, saying he would push legal reforms to protect journalists and create a security plan in the wake of a report from the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), which outlined widespread impunity for attacks on reporters in Mexico.

Under the plan, patterned after one in Colombia, the government would provide protections for journalists facing threats, including security relocation to a safe haven. AP

Angel Antonio takes helm of Bates 141 Philippines Leads young and talented team

Angel Antonio

Philippines / July 7, 2010 – Pete Sandin, CEO, Bates 141 Philippines, after serving almost two and a half years at the agency, will leave for his homeland Australia on August 1.

He hands over the helm of the agency to current General Manager, Angel Antonio, who will be promoted to Chief Executive Officer effective immediately.

"Peter has done an outstanding job in getting some of the industry's best talent into our agency and also bring these 141's Essentials Creative Brands," said Jeffrey Yu, Chairman, Bates 141 Asia Pacific.

"Angel is definitely ACTION personified; a powerhouse who's great in motivating and inspiring the team, and winning over clients," added Jeffrey.

Angel has been in the communications business for more than 18 years. As General Manager, she was instrumental in growing the agency with new clients' accounts including Japan Tobacco Intl, PrimeLink, Bates and new weddings, quite a number of local companies who are looking into marketing for the very first time. Angel not only hails from a strong background in advertising, but has a wide and deep experience in mainstream advertising. Prior to Bates 141, Angel worked at Ogilvy Action and JWT. At JWT, Angel was the South East Asia Regional Management Director for her Unilever Brand account.

Said Angel, "It is a privilege and, more exciting, a challenge to lead such a young, energetic and talented team. Tapping into our strong local insights, we will continue to help our clients develop strategic, creative and innovative solutions to any business problem they may have."

Bates 141 is The Change Agency. Its long-time Clients include HSBC, Safeway, Nike, Bates 141 believes that change can only happen when you start looking at things differently.

Infant formula Similac recalled

WASHINGTON—Drugmaker Abbott Laboratories on Wednesday said it was recalling millions of containers of its best-selling Similac infant formula that may be contaminated with insect parts.

The voluntary action affects up to 5 million Similac-brand powder formulas sold in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam and some Caribbean countries. The company said the products may contain a small beetle or larvae, which could cause stomach ache and digestion problems.

The recall does not affect any liquid formulas or other Abbott-branded products.

A company spokesman said Abbott uncovered the insects last week in one section of a manufacturing plant in Sturgis, Michigan.

"We immediately shut down that one area and began an investigation," Abbott's Melissa Brotz said. "We're in the process of resolving it now." Abbott manufactures Similac at several US sites.

Brotz said the company had been considering with the Food and Drug Administration, which determined there was no "immediate health risk" from the contamination.

Consumers can enter the lot number on their containers online at SimilacRecalls.com or call 1-800-986-8540 from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern time Monday through Saturday.

Abbott expects to lose $160 million in connection with the recall. However, the North Chicago, Illinois, company confirmed its third-quarter earnings guidance between $1.01 and $1.05 per share. Shares of Abbott Laboratories fell 1% cents to $53.99. AP

WORLD BRIEFS

Bad news for Dems

WASHINGTON—More bad news for Democrats clinging to control of Congress: Independent voters are nearly as grumpy as Republicans about political fortunes this year. In an August Pew Research Center poll this month, independents, who can be pivotal in many congressional races, prefer their Republican candidates over the Democrat by 52 percent to 36 percent—which up next to 62 percent to 28 percent among independents considered likelier to vote. The figures are the latest cautionary note for Democrats, who face a Nov. 2 election flap to retain the sluggish economy and President Barack Obama's tepid popularity give Republicans a strong chance to capture control of the House of Representatives and perhaps the Senate. AP

US aid refined

UNITED NATIONS—US President Barack Obama on Wednesday defended US aid to impoverished people even during your economic times at home yet promised a diverse approach, favoring nations that commit to democracy and economic revival. Addressing world leaders, Obama offered no new commitments of $3 billion, but rather a blueprint of the development policy that will drive his government's efforts and direction where the money flows. His message was that the United States wants to help countries help themselves, not offer aid that provides short-term relief without advancing societies. AP

Middle East peace

UNITED NATIONS—US President Barack Obama is ushering the world's center around the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, challenging the United Nations to support an agreement that would create an independent Palestine and a secure Israel in a year's time. In a speech to the annual session of the UN General Assembly on Thursday, Obama planned to call on world leaders to cast aside decades of division over the conflict, overcome cynicism and prove their support for a settlement to be reached by the two sides that his administration is now pushing against long odds. AP

Divisions over war plan

WASHINGTON—US President Barack Obama's early attempts to seize control of a war-ravaged Afghanistan war yielded a strategy that pleased almost no one and hasn't tamed the tide of a conflict now its 10th year. Just how contentious that plan has been, inside the Obama White House as well as outside, is captured in Bob Woodward's new book. The account exposes the roots of an Afghanistan set plan driven more by politics than national security, and shows the president worried about losing the support of the public and his party. AP

Malaria: From ape to man

WASHINGTON—Malaria appears to have jumped to humans from gorillas, another species may have spread globally from a single gorilla to a single human, researchers reported on Wednesday. DNA from the droppings of nearly 3,000 apes—gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos—shows the strain of malaria parasite most common in humans is virtually identical to one of many strains that infects gorillas. Reuters

NYC taxi scam

NEW YORK—Thousands of tourists and residents who took New York City's iconic yellow taxis were quietly ripped off by drivers who frequently manipulated their credits to double the fare rate, officials said on Wednesday as US citizens were arrested. Six drivers netted as more than $10,000 apiece by repeatedly bumping their meters up to a higher suburban rate when they actually were in the city, the Manhattan district attorney's office said. One driver overcharged more than 3,100 times between November 2008 and June 2010. Unsuspecting passengers overpaid an average of about $5. AP

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The WORLD

Criss Lorenne B. Gasco

Asia wary as China asserts territorial claims

KUALA LUMPUR—As a newly assertive China confronts Japan and the United States over its territorial ambitions, other Asian nations are growing wary of being crushed between brawling powers.

China has a long list of disputes over land and sea, including swathes of the Himalayan plateau also claimed by India, and the islets and reefs of the Spratlys chain staked out by Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei.

As Beijing's economic might grows, many of its neighbors now find themselves defending their own territorial ambitions against a giant they literally cannot afford to offend.

China's threats of unspecified "hardest actions" against Japan, which has refused to release a trawler captain detained in an incident in disputed waters in the East China Sea two weeks ago, have rung out across the region.

And Beijing has warned Washington not to wade into one of its most complex disputes, the island chains of the South China Sea, during Friday's meeting in New York between US President Barack Obama and Southeast Asian leaders.

As the old saying goes, small- or emerging-market states they do not become "the grass that is trampled when the buffaloes fight," said Simon Tay from the Singapore Institute for International Affairs.

Tay said the new dynamic was potentially healthy, but if the competing powers "do start to push and pull," the 10-member Southeast Asian bloc must present a united front and not be split like Mao-style.

China vehemently opposes "internationalizing" its territorial wrangles, preferring to deal quietly with each claimant country on a bilateral basis, a stance that gives it more clout.

So it was no surprise that US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's proposal at July's security talks in Hanoi for a multilateral approach on the South China Sea was met with a sharp rebuke.

"There was quite an interesting and sharp exchange between the Americans and the Chinese," Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo said, recounting the discussion that followed with Clinton's Chinese counterpart.

"At some points, the atmosphere was just a little tense," he said with diplomatic understatement.

China makes it has complete sovereignty over the Spratly and Paracel islands in the South China Sea, a region rich in oil, gas and fisheries, as well as a strategic waterway linking East Asia with Europe and the Middle East.

But Clinton said that resolving competing claims there was "optional" to regional stability and the national interests of the United States, which has flagged its concern over a looming threat to free navigation.

UN Defense Secretary Robert Gates in June called for free access in the South China Sea and alluded to alleged threats against US oil and gas firms interested in offshore exploration in waters claimed by Vietnam.

Chinese vessels last year confronted US naval surveillance ships in manifolds by the disputed region, which Beijing's rulers say is views as a "Chinese lake."

India is also watchful over China's growing presence, particularly its heavy investments in ports being built in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, seen as part of Beijing's ambitions for a blue-water naval fleet.

Some regional nations, particularly Vietnam which fought a brief but deadly 1988 naval battle with China in the South China Sea, have welcomed the new US willingness to act as a counterweight to Beijing.

China has angered the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations it has no hegemonic ambitions, and to be showing no sign of military aggression, but fears remain that it will unleash it will become a regional bully.

However, Li Mingjiang from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore, said conclusions were not an emphatic about Washington's attempts to reclaim its old clout in Asia.

Thailand, Cambodia and Singapore "really don't want to see any confrontation between China and the US because when you have that kind of situation, they may have to take sides and that is something they are very reluctant to do."

Some observers say China has been provoked to some extent by the United States and by Japan which itself is taking a more muscular approach by refusing to release the Chinese captain whose speedier collided with Japanese Coast Guard vessels.

Rodolfo Severino, a former Asean secretary general, said regional nations would continue to firmly pursue their long-standing territorial claims despite the growing might of China.

"The interest of Southeast Asia in this is that there should be no disruption of peace and stability and freedom of navigation," Severino said.

"But at the same time, Southeast Asians don't want China and Japan to come to blows, or China and the US. China should not be provoked into taking violent measures."

AFP

CHINA has built structures on reefs of the Spratlys chain to assert its claim over disputed territory in the South China Sea. AFP

Philippine International Trading Corporation dti

PITC

INVITATION TO BID

Supply and Delivery of One (1) Lot Mixed Non-FMBs, Cut LUMBER Codons NATO

Approved Budget for the Contract: P19,249,700.10

1. The Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC), for the Philippine Navy / Philippine Marine Corps (PN/PMC) intends to apply the sum of Philippine Million Two Hundred Forty Thousand Seven Hundred Only) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Supply and Delivery of One (1) Lot Mixed Non-FMBs, Cut LUMBER Codons NATO and Consumables (Miscellaneous Items) for the Philippine Navy / Philippine Marine Corps (PN/PMC).

2. Bidders should have taken up the subject contract/s as listed, or similar contract/s.

3. Bidders shall avail of the tax privileges for the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) registered bidders only.

4. Prospective bidders may obtain further information from the PITC Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on the address given below during office hours.

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 AM.

7. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the following forms and amounts:

8. Bid opening shall be on the address below on the same date.

9. The PITC reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award in accordance with Section 41 of the Revised IRR of RA 9184, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

10. For further information, please refer to:

11. The Schedule of Bidding Activities shall be as follows:

ACTIVITIES	TIME	VENUE
1. Sale and issuance of Bid Documents	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM during working days up to 23 September 2010	PITC Headquarters in the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Building 229, Corregidor Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone
2. Pre-Bid Conference (non-attendance will not disqualify bidder)	2:00 PM	PITC Conference Room, Second Floor, Building 229, Corregidor Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone
3. Submission and Opening of Bids	10 October 2010 2:00 PM	PITC Head Office, 5th Floor Conference Room, MRO Building, 316 Quezon Ave. corner Timog Ave., Quezon City

12. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the PITC Headquarters in the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Building 229, Corregidor Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Tel. No. 318-6000 to 318-6010 during Mondays to Fridays from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and purchase the complete set of Bidding Documents from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM during working days up to 23 September 2010.

13. PITC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process and, to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Atty. VICTORIA C. MACHADO
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

Bidding on 16 August 2010 | PITC Website (www.pitc.gov.ph) and PHILGEPS Website

PITC-Invitation to Bid-001

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) announces that the following are applicants for judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (MCJR), MARIKINA CITY, Br.165: ACEREY, Pacheco C.; *(REGION VI), ROXAS CITY, CAPIZ, Br.18:* ALAJAR, Ignacio I.; BELARMINO, Benjamin Jr., C.; BELUSO, Rudolfo I.; DAMIAN, Noel Darren C.; DE LA FUENTE, Ranela F.; DEL CASTILLO, Filipa D.; ESCUTIN, Luisito P.; LEONOR, Rommel L.; POTATO, Albert I.; SULLANO, Josie G.; TOLENTINO, Ma. Maya Bien M.; *(REGION IX) SHARI, SULU, Br.25:* ALFAD, Alsad Jr., H.; JAINAL, Ombra T.; RODRIGUEZ, Rohermia J.; SAKKAM, Ahmad A.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (REGION IV), NOVELETA, & DASMARIÑAS, CAVITE: AREVALO, Maria Rowena M.

The public may submit sworn complaint, report, or opposition (in ten legible copies) against any of the aforesaid applicants not later than 04 OCTOBER 2010 (Monday) to the JBC.

All applicants must submit to the JBC ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1 (Revised September 2007); proof of age and Filipino citizenship; and 2010 Ombudsman, NBI, BIR, OBC and Police Clearances; Medical Certificate; and other requirements before the date of their interview. Those who fail to submit the necessary requirements shall neither be interviewed nor considered for nomination.

23 September 2010.

FELIPA BUHLUNGAN-ANAMA
Assistant Clerk of Court

Strikes cripple France

PARIS—French commuters squeezed into limited public transport and fought for cars pushing spots on Thursday as a second round of strikes against President Nicolas Sarkozy's plan to raise the retirement age from 60 to 62 hobbled trains, planes and schools across France.

Fewer than half of the lines of the Paris Metro were working normally, according to the RATP public transport network, and half the scheduled long-haul trains were expected to be canceled, according to the SNCF state-run rail system.

Major cancellations were expected at Orly and Charles de Gaulle airports, the Paris airport authority said on its website. Aeroports de Paris advised passengers to check with airlines before their flights.

Union leaders are hoping for a massive show of popular discontent at the 232 demonstrations planned throughout the country and aimed at topping the turnout on Sept. 7, when at least 1.1 million people took to the streets to protest the planned overhaul of the defined-benefit pension system.

The strikes are seen as a test for Sarkozy. AP

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Lady Falcons bag V-League title

Straight-set rout of SSC-Excelroof lands Adamson 2nd Shakey's plum

SWEETER THE SECOND TIME AROUND The Adamson Lady Falcons celebrate their sweep conquest of the SSC Lady Stags in the winner-take-all championship game.

By Cedrill P. Tagsa

ADAMSON TURNED an unpowered fight showdown into a rout as the Lady Falcons walloped the San Sebastian-Excelroof Lady Stags in straight sets yesterday to bag the Season 7 Second Conference championship, their second in the Shakey's V-League, at the FilOil Flying V Arena in San Juan.

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TENG: 26 points

SalvMalo: Six steals

Teng stars as RP U-18 five whips Saudis

JOHN TENG filed a game-high 26 points to power the Philippines past Saudi Arabia, 86-66, Wednesday at the start of the Asia Under 18 Basketball Championships in Incheon, Korea.

The 6-foot-1 Teng, son of former PBA player Mole Teng, shot 73 percent from the field, grabbed five rebounds and pulled off five steals for the Filipinos, who committed group coach Chino's 82-66 rout of Syria later in the day.

Aaron Bue Eagles star Kobe Barcos, son of another former pro Bong Barcos, added 11 points, three assists and six steals for the Filipinos being supported by Nokia Philippines.

The game was close in the first quarter, 22-21, but the Filipinos made their move after halftime when coach Eric Altamirano's boys began to roughen up on defense.

"We scrambled them with our zone," said Altamirano. "We were able to bother them with our pressing defense."

The Philippines seeks a second straight victory today.

Outplayed underneath the boards, 34-27, the Filipinos compensated with better team play as they toured a total of 18 assists, 11 more than the Saudis.

Jeth Rosario, the tallest among the Filipinos at 6-foot-7, contributed 13 points and one block while 6-4 Kevin Ferrer, 6-5 Russel Escoto and 5-8 Bobbie Sison chipped in eight points apiece.

Aaronson Raphael Hamal and Mac Sedfrey Penacoral finished with seven and six points, respectively.

Abubtan Alzaroomi topscored for Saudi Arabia with 17 points.

Altamirano expects his wards to do better in the coming days as they get accustomed to the Western air.

Dennis Hartbourker

Lions seek record 15th straight win

By Cedelf P. Topas

SAN BEDA aims to snatch the record 15-game unbeaten start achieved by San Sebastian last season as it tangles with rival LaSalle today in the 86th NCAA basketball tournament at the FIBAD Flying V Arena in San Juan.

Game time is 4 p.m. with the Lions also looking to secure solitude in recovery of an elimination-round survey and an outright championship berth.

San Sebastian takes on an already-eliminated Avellano squad in the first game at 2 p.m.

San Beda coach Frankie Lim insists that he has not entertained thoughts of a sweep just yet, with two games remaining in their schedule.

"We going to be tough, but we'll see after the LaSalle game," said Lim.

San Beda and LaSalle have one of the league's oldest rivalries and their games have been marked by tight, physical contests.

But that has changed this season with the Lions parading a bonded up roster, proving dominant to scoring a rare coat of the Knights to the first round.

Unlike the Knights, who are already out of the running for a Final Four spot, the Lions will have more at stake in the game.

The Lions are coming off a 70-46 rout of Final Four hopeful Jose Rizal U last Monday.

"No matter how dominant we are in the eliminations record, it's not going to mean anything if we don't win the championship," said Lim.

The Stags carried back the hard-fighting Mapua Cardinals, 85-70, also last Monday to clinch their 13th win in 14 matches and the other twice-to-beat advantage in the Final Four.

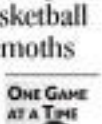
The Stags semifinal bonus though will be put to naught if San Beda goes on to sweep their elimination round.

If that happens, the negligible semifinals will be applied with No. 3 JRU and No. 4 Mapua facing each other in a knockout duel and the winner advancing opposite the No. 2 seed for the second Final berth.

"Hopefully we can force a Final Four," said San Sebastian coach Jim Ignacio.

HAKKEO HAH San Beda center of power Sudan Daniels (center) shoots off Bo. Brockin's pic Tau and Timothy Mac Cox in a recent game. MARIO DIAZ

Looking for basketball behemoths



ONE GAME AT A TIME

Jun Sarmenta

THE PHILIPPINE basketball scene will grabs the limelight when it's time to send a Philippine delegation to international tilts.

When we says we're talking about Olympic basketball a long time ago, the unique allure of the squad sees the sports story to look forward to.

The chosen players who make the team had what looked like 82 pieces and are together on top of the sports page. We never Asia's best shots, and even if we didn't have much of a chance to win top medals, we anxiously looked forward to who would make it.

But to get to where the thing and it check you feel that you were part of the essence of the soup of the basketball world.

* * *

The hoops scene today has changed dramatically and has forced us to rethink the management of our national teams. The best players of the country are not readily available because of professional league obligations, although the PBA has loosed its players and expertise consistently to Asiad and recently, Fiba Asia SF squads since 1998.

There is a constant need to look for big players who can be naturalized since it's what every basketball country is doing.

Last month, we cam dusting the Fiba World Championship shot a quick, sweet-shooting team still never beat a still and fleet-footed Team Iran—the class of the basketball world and are planning an audibly and shooting from afar as seventy as any midrange specialist.

* * *

This is the dilemma of the Smart Gilas national team as it continues to look for bigs that can be naturalized, or seasoned players like those in the PBA.

Smart Gilas is the second all-star effort backed by a sports patron to have a permanent, regularly trained national basketball team.

It is a replication of the successful Northern Consumer Consolidated (NCC) approach in the 1990s that had the likes of Sandino Lim, Allan Caidic and other up-and-coming stars playing alongside then-still-and-savvy Americans who opted to make Filipino their basketball citizenship.

For Smart Gilas, some of the best young players have given a few years to the national team before making the leap to the PBA.

* * *

The Smart Gilas effort is, no doubt, a noble one, but there is reality that finding big and talented players willing to be naturalized is not that easy.

The naturalization process is also not a fast citizen, and requirements have to be met. Smart Gilas has also returned to the PBA for reinforcements, and the pool has already agreed to lend three of its marquee players that the national team feels can help in the bind.

But will all this produce a cohesive national team in time for the Asian Games?

The team will never be scoring in the best department because that has been the trademark of Filipino hoops contingents. But against teams that are bigger and have been playing together for some time, we may have to be patient with the Smart Gilas approach before it reaps the harvest it was created for.

* * *

So matter who makes the final cut, the composition of the national squad will continue to pique the interest of this basketball-crazy nation.

The game is still the national pastime, and the belief that Filipino players are still the best in the region has hardly waned through the years.

Hope springs eternal that we will enjoy vengeance against Korea, Iran, Jordan, Iraq, the bulk of tripping up in the midgames, or pull out from under the rail and lanky Chinese and Middle Eastern twists.

Yes, we can do it, but we do need acres-pile of bigger players to help the cause.

SPORTSWATCH

Pasay stagfest unfolds today

SOME 50 fighting cocks today in the fun [illegible] Sing Derby at the Pasay City Cockpit.

The derby, one of a series of popular festivals this season, comes on the heels of last week's Pacquiao homecoming in Sing Derby hosted by teaming superstar Manny Pacquiao, and even by Bohol Governor's night, an 100 stamps and Mr. Cockers mascots.

Seasoned rooster Jdc Roque and PCSO pit manager Bulchay Otero are hosting today's derby, where the winners stand to receive at least P500,000 in guaranteed prize.

Meanwhile, the Sabungero Big Event Sing Derby fires off at the PCC on Oct. 1 with Luc dela Rosa and Boss Magsaysay as hosts.

BY TOP CHOICE
At San Lazaro LP

Lady Falcons bag V-League title

From page A24

Lady Falcons fashioned out a 26-24, 25-17, 25-16 triumph in the winner-take-all Game 3.

Sensing delivered the game-winning hit, a down-the-line spike, that sent the Adamson gallery into a frenzy.

Jumping to glee, the Lady Falcons circled the court as they displayed the feat they achieved in the first outdoor-only tournament.

The Lady Stags nodded to their dugout, frustration after suffering their sixth defeat in the finals.

The Lady Falcons made it look so easy posting up a virtual wall at the net to frustrate the Lady Stags and counter to victory in just 69 minutes.

"We were very disciplined and prepared, that's why we were confident to win the title," said Adamson coach Dulce Pante.

"This win is definitely sweeter because we won the title in a Game 3," added Pante, when asked to compare the victory with their last triumph two years ago over Ateneo.

The Lady Falcons thus joined University of Santo Tomas and La Salle as the only teams with at least two titles.

UST, which took a leave of absence in the tournament, has six crowns while La Salle owns three.

For the Lady Stags and their prized Thai import Jeng Bualee, it was another regrettable end to what was another promising year.

San Sebastian failed to make the conference's playoffs. Jeng's stint finish for the ninth time in seven stints. Bualee was not crowned when the Lady Stags won their only title to the second conference of Season 5.

Meanwhile, international campaigner Michelle Laborte, getting a new lease on her career after several disappointing stints with other teams, finished with 18 points for the Lady Falcons, while rookie Sherwin Gail Martin added six points.

"It feels so good to finally win one here," said Laborte, fighting back tears of joy. Laborte had stints with Ateneo, Lyceum and University of St. La Salle, before she was tapped by Pante to reinforce Adamson.

San Sebastian hardly put up a challenge in the third set as the Lady Falcons, true to pre-emphasis on blocking, a facet of their game that had brought them success in the tournament.

PBA top brass main guests in Scoop session

MEMBERS of the Philippine Basketball Association executive board, headed by new chair Hans Pancho will be the main guests in today's Scoop Ex Extra-yon session at the Extra-yon Restaurant Pacific Beach in Manila.

Al Bayton of Financials and lawyer Manuel to Mondragon of Rain or Shine will join Pancho at the PBA top brass discussion the 36th league's 36th season which opens on Oct. 3.

Also invited to today's forum, sponsored by PLDT, Bitag brand and Fiba, are sub-zonals association president Jeff Tamayo and members of the Asian Games-bound SF will test-mic hosts, as well as body-building world champion Jerick Tenioka.

Session starts at 11 a.m. and will be aired over UNTV at 6 p.m. and over Sports Radio at 7 o'clock.

Athletes' heroism, and the networks' pathetic sense of values

INSIDE SPORTS

Ronnie Nathanielsz

Seriously, ABS-CBN and GMA 7, the two leading networks in the country, owe a deserving tribute to include space in their highly-rated newscasts.

* * *

The two major networks spend considerable time and resources on those business interests—and how the mother lay to pass their stiff air waves, as through the various roadblocking tactics about media freedom's coverage—but, as Sen. Aquino IV noted in those rocky coverage to basketball superstar Jiaxin Yao, or Dede Ollinos's wrestlers can't drags have any redeeming value.

Ah, the lavish comeback of our three Cup teams—which danced its way to victory after losing its two opening tougher matches, but captured the coveted doubles to stay alive, and then won the two crowns the singles—didn't merit a narration, as far as we know.

Here was a pleasing example of the fighting spirit of our tennis stars Cecil Mercado and Treat Huey who have been overlooked by the Filipino people even since they returned to play for our country and bring us honor.

But, alas, to the network news bosses it is never nothing compared to the loves and foibles of show business personalities.

* * *

To us and the many others who have in many ways to describe the quest for excellence of our young men and women and efforts to be a source of pounded pride and national glory, the virtual ignoring of legitimate sports stories is a sad reflection of a pathetic, if not perverse, sense of values.

How to account's sense on the achievements of our Davis Cup team be ignored while Boy Chinua and Lindsay Lohan's troubles with the law get time and attention on our network news?

This is not a proposition to a daily basis on television—with the exception of the coverage of every move of Pacquiao—we honestly feel this is an even bigger crime than the trampling that Mindanao has suffered tragedy.

It sends a terribly wrong message to our people in terms of values, and fails to accentuate the positive influence of sports in the young and, to a broader sentence, on the nation itself.

* * *

Show business or entertainment news is simply covered on the evening programs that are proper outsiders for such. But to parse off less than 6 months, while stories that leave an about or accidily eschewing effort on our peoples' lives and there well being as we have to evidence the very values TV networks have an obligation to reinforce. If we at least to live by.

It is our enough that the networks and Solar TV telecast a wide variety of sports events. It is essential that sports be made an integral part of the news.

The values and virtues of discipline, hard work, fair play and sportsmanship, and the joy of victory and the agonies to defeat are issues with a much deeper meaning and message than any show business shenanigans could ever hope to convey.

Mercado bolsters Smart Gilas Asiad five

MERCADO

By Manuel R. Carrillo and June Navarro

JOLLIMIN Mercado was later tapped to bolster the Smart Gilas national team in the Asian Games.

BY coach Rajko Toroman yesterday named Mercado as the third Philippine Basketball Association player to reinforce the Nationals after the league trained Ali Peek and Jolly Villanueva for the quadrennial games in Guangzhou on Nov. 12 to 27.

Toroman picked Mercado after seeing the explosive playmaker up close during the Smart Gilas tuneup game against the Elasto Painters.

Basic Or Blaise team owners Terry Que and Raymond Yu immediately informed about the request, did not hesitate to concede.

"As long as it is for the good country, we are ready to sacrifice," Que said.

"It's an honor for us to lend Ild, and help the RP team accomplish its mission," added Yu.

Mercado's spot was originally intended for James Yap, the Derby Ace gunslinger who is the reigning PBA MVP, but Yap bagged off last week after undergoing nasal surgery. He is also undergoing knee complications in his rearrangement from serious Bob Arquiza.

"We are happy for him (Mercado) despite knowing how important he is to our campaign (in the PBA Philippine Cup)," Rain or Shine coach Gilroy Garcia said.

Toroman said they will drop one player from the 12-man lineup they submitted to the Philippine Olympic Committee to accommodate Mercado.

Mercado, Williams and Peeters will join Smart Gilas regulars Chris Tiu, Mark Barroca, Mac Baracael, JV Casio, Japeth Aguilar, Jason Ballesteros, Dylan Ababou, Greg Slaughter, Marcio Lassiter and Alberich Ramos.

There's also a possibility that American Marcus Brooks, who has applied for naturalization, and converse-based panel Chris Lutz will be included once they obtained their Philippine passports.

ANTONIO Margarito (left) exists punches with Ghanian Joshua Clottey in their 10th fight. Margarito won by unanimous decision. JOHN GURZINSKI/AP

Roach: Manny just too quick to be bullied

By Ronnie Nathanielsz

CELEBRATED TRAINER Freddie Roach yesterday shrugged off fellow trainer Robert Garcia's prediction that his ward, Antonio Margarito, is going to knock Manny Pacquiao out in their showdown for the vacated WBC super welterweight title on the Cowboys Stadium on Nov. 13 in Arlington, Texas.

According to Internet reports, Garcia said that Margarito, being taller and bigger, will push Pacquiao to the ropes, lean on him, try to bully him and then give him a beating.

But Roach told the Internet during Pacquiao's workout at the Johnny Hooks Gym in Quezon City yesterday that Garcia's pronouncements were far from the truth.

Roach said that to contrast, "the reports I get from his camp is that he is very tense.

"I am not worried about Margarito," he said.

The four-time Trainer of the Year explained that "people don't really know. You can watch Manny on TV and say, oh he's fast. But you don't know how fast he is until you get in the ring with him.

"And you know what, there is no sparring partner in the world who can mimic Manny Pacquiao. The guys that he (Garcia) has are going to be slow compared to Manny."

Though he acknowledges Margarito's knack for power and knock-out advantages, Roach said there's no cause for alarm.

"As long as Manny is a hundred percent in shape, what's he still Ite, I am not worried about anybody in the world," the trainer said.

Conditioning guru Alex Ariza described Margarito as a fighter who "relies on pressure."

"He's gonna take as many punches as you can give him, come you down and then he'll pick up the pace by the seventh, eighth and ninth rounds. But with Manny you can't do that," said Ariza.

"You get yourself hit by Manny that much, I can guarantee you are going to get knocked out, I don't care how good. Emanuel(sic) chin to, you are going to get knocked out by Manny if you let him hit you."

Team Pacquiao will leave for Baguio City on Sunday afternoon to continue training.

RP chessers bow to Spain as Gomez falls

KHANTY-MANSIYSK, 30 Rssia.—Grandmaster Wesley So held former world championship finalist Gil Alexei Shirov to a draw, but the Philippines fell short against Spain, 1.5-2.5, Wednesday (Thursday in Manila) in the second round of the 39th Chess Olympiad.

GM Darwin Laylo also split the point with GM Jordi Magem Badals (Elo 2589), in 80 moves of the Sicilian defense, and so did International Master Richard Bitoon against GM Daniel Alcantara in 42 moves of the Sicilian Smith-velkov to boards 3 and 4, respectively.

The turning point came in board 2 as GM John Paul Gomez loosed to GM Juan Salgado in 22 moves of the Slav despite handling the white pieces.

Gomez, who became a full-fledged GM during the 2008 Dresden Olympiad, resigned with his isolated king under heavy siege by Salgado's queen, rook and bishop.

The loss, which came after the Filipinos' 4-0 rout of South Korea in the first round Tuesday, pulled RP-Azores to a tie for 43rd to 105th places with two match points based on the scoring system that gives two points for a win, one point for a draw and zero for a loss.

SO: Fighting draw

GOMEZ: Only loss

The 2700-seeded Filipinos will try to bounce back when they take on No. 55 Scotland, which saw sweeps by second seed Ukraine, 4-0, in the third round.

So, youngest competitor in the 2006 Turin Olympiad at 12, will play white against GM Colin McNab in board one.

Laylo will replace Gomez in board two and face Kenneth Archibald-Grant, one of several female players seeing action in the Open section.

GM Eugene Torre debuts against IM Stephen Sharon-Menahem in board three while Bitoon mans board four against Fide Master Graham Morrison.

The Filipina women, who cruised to a 4-0 romp of Netherlands Antilles in the first round, take on a reality check when it hosted no Byelorussia, 4.5-0.5.

WFM Cleorafe Charline Caraculio scored a shortcut when she held top Byelorussian player IM Cristina Adela Foisor to a draw.

Her teammates fell in succession, however, with Catherine Perena losing to WGM Elena Gomis, Sherille Gonzaga to WGM Carmen Vkicic and Jhelp Hom Ann yielding to WGM Olha Titova.

Other results (board 1 unless noted): Russia 4, Scotland 0.5 (Ivanchuk, 1) 1-0; Lahno, 2) 1-0; Kosintseva, 3) 1-0; Galliamova, 4) 1-0); Ukraine 4, Netherlands Antilles 0 (Ushenina, 1) 1-0; Zhukova, 2) 1-0; Kosintseva, 3) 1-0; Galliamova, 4) 1-0); Georgia 4, Nigeria 0 (Kobalia, 1) 1-0; Javakhishvili, 2) 1-0; Chiburdanidze, 3) 1-0; Gvetadze, 4) 1-0); China 3, Brazil 1 (Ju, 1) 1-0; Hou, 2) 1-0; Huang, 3) 0-1; Zhao, 4) 1-0); Hungary 4, Argentina 0 (Polgar, 1) 1-0; Hebden, 2) 1-0; Sebag, 3) 1-0; Horvath, 4) 1-0); Poland 3.5, Slovakia 0.5 (Socko, 1) 1-0; Krasenkow, 2) 1-0; Peptan, 3) 0-1; Sebag, 4) 1-0); Armenia 3.5, Ukraine 0.5 (Aronian, 1) 1-0; Ivanchuk, 2) 1-0; Ghaem Maghami, 3) 0-1; Movsesian, 4) 1-0); Russia 3.5, Ukraine 0.5 (Kramnik, 1) 1-0; Ivanchuk, 2) 1-0; Grischuk, 3) 0-1; Svidler, 4) 1-0); Armenia 3.5, Georgia 0.5 (Aronian, 1) 1-0; Kobalia, 2) 1-0; Ghaem Maghami, 3) 0-1; Movsesian, 4) 1-0); Hungary 3.5, Ukraine 0.5 (Polgar, 1) 1-0; Ivanchuk, 2) 1-0; Grischuk, 3) 0-1; Svidler, 4) 1-0); Armenia 3.5, Hungary 0.5 (Aronian, 1) 1-0; Polgar, 2) 1-0; Ghaem Maghami, 3) 0-1; Movsesian, 4) 1-0); Russia 3.5, Armenia 0.5 (Kramnik, 1) 1-0; Aronian, 2) 1-0; Grischuk, 3) 0-1; Svidler, 4) 1-0); Ukraine 3.5, Armenia 0.5 (Ivanchuk, 1) 1-0; Aronian, 2) 1-0; Ghaem Maghami, 3) 0-1; Movsesian, 4) 1-0); Russia 3.5, Hungary 0.5 (Kramnik, 1) 1-0; Polgar

SPORTS

Garcia pushes for full P740-M PSC budget

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE SPORTS Commission chair Mikee Garcia yesterday pushed for the agency's P740-million budget before the Senate finance committee.

Garcia said that if the General Appropriations Act approves the budget for 2011, the PSC will have no problem implementing all its projects, including grassroots sports programs like the Philippine National Games and Batang Pinoy, as well as infrastructure development.

The Department of Budget and Management, however, endorsed the amount of P500 million only for the PSC, which is a far cry from the P220 million the GAA approved for the agency this year.

The PSC is also working on the permanent resolution of the percentage of funds it receives from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

Garcia said that if the PSC gets the lawfully mandated 3 percent of the gross earnings of the Pagcor, amounting to P5 billion a year, it would cover the reduced budget from the GAA.

The 12st Amd covers the PSC's operations and grassroots projects like national-level games, while money from the Pagcor and other sources comprise the National Sports Development Fund, which is used for athletes, training and competitions of elite athletes.

Garcia also said adequate funds will help the country more medals in international competitions.

The PSC is in the think of preparations for the Asian Games in Guangzhou, which it has earmarked P310 million for the SEA delegation.

Castelar, Medrano post close wins

JOSEPH LASTELAR and Aziz Medrano pulled off rough wins in the ninth and penultimate leg at the Clark International Speedway in Pampanga recently to bolster their title bids in the Shipmodia Formula Racing Super Series.

Castelar capped his third win in the Formula SL Super class, while Medrano staged a big comeback in the final race to claim the Motor-SOK crown.

Pampanga's Archie Lagman topped both the qualifying and pre-final heats of the Formula SL Expert and looked headed for an easy win he controlled the early pace in the finale.

But Castelar turned the heat with five laps to go and went on to win in 12 minutes and 22.341 seconds, or 0.472 of a second clear of Lagman.

Medrano won four features, who won the qualifying and pre-final heats, by just 0.007 seconds. He grabbed the lead in the third lap and needed all all challengers in pursuit in 9:13.067 seconds.

Medrano raised his total to 370 points, 80 ahead of Escalante.

Prodigious Christian Gaddi surge all three races in the Formula SL Novice division, while Don Benito dominated the SQ Kart Race.

Steve Silva, Contributor

MEDRANO

Informatics, CEU cagers barge into Naascu semis

By Marc Anthony Reyes

INFORMATICS AND Centro Escolar University handed opponents crude yesterday to gain the last two tickets to the semifinals of the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) men's basketball at the University of Manila Gym.

Informatics clubbed New Era, 91-63, to earn the right to challenge twice-to-beat qualifier STI, while CEU edged Pasiana, 67-58, to forge a duel against leader UM (16-2) in the semifinals slated tomorrow.

STI and Informatics actually finished the eliminations with similar 13-5 win-loss slates, but the Olympians nudged the Icons for the No. 2 slot and the nod to host Sonias on account of a better quotient.

The things will be different on the semifinals as STI will be missing four key players, who were all ejected during their fight-marred Cignal ng Bayan tilt Tuesday.

Center Marlson Sabellina, guards Jerald Bautista and Howard Calos, and forward Jesis Montero will serve their one-game suspension in the next eliminations.

Sabellina fought with Anthony Hawkins, while Bautista and Montero were ejected for joining the fray. Calos committed two separate technical fouls which took him out of the game in the first quarter.

Editor Raul D. Pangalo • Assistant Editor Carole S. Montano

BUSINESS

EMERGENCY!
THINNING HAIR
STOP IT NOW
892-HAIR

RP antipoverty programs to get WB backing

President witnesses signing of $434-M agreement

By Michelle F. Remo and Norman Bordadora

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS to reduce poverty in the country appear to have borne fruit with the World Bank committing to financially assist the Philippines in meeting its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

President Aquino on Wednesday met with World Bank president Robert Zoellick, who paid a courtesy call at the hotel holed in New York City.

During the meeting, Mr. Aquino received word that the finance institution would be "ready to forge a strategic partnership with the Philippines for achieving inclusive growth."

The World Bank chief said that the Aquino administration is moving in the right direction, when it started to implement programs aimed at shoring up investment, fighting corruption in government, and extending financial assistance to the poor.

"I appreciate the opportunity to meet with President Aquino and to listen to his plans for fighting poverty and promoting economic growth and good governance," Zoellick said in a statement issued by the World Bank yesterday.

The signing of the $434-million Millennium Challenge Corp. agreement between the RP and the Philippine government and a meeting with members of the Filipino

BANKER, B2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Sept. 23, 2010
44.120

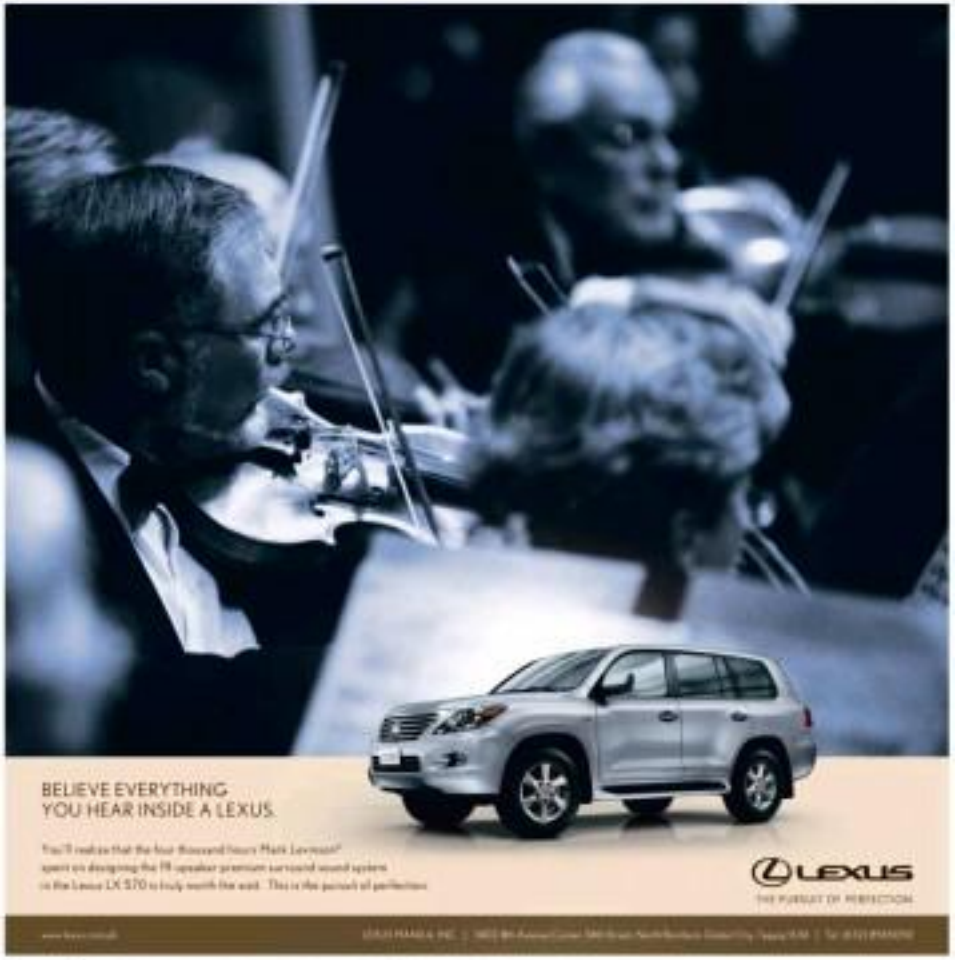
STOCK MARKET
Sept. 23, 2010
13.38

Shares close up

LOCAL STOCKS yesterday closed up amid positive investor sentiment on the fundamentals and ease in big sellers during the session.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index gained 13.38 points, or 0.20 percent, to close at 6,867.43. There were 88 advancers against

(for more stories on page B2)



Stricter picket lines rules

Ruth J. Pabalinas

STERE PROBE companies can breathe a sigh of relief in the changes of labor interests over the recent decision of the Supreme Court prohibiting certain picket line activities.

In May 1990, Phimco Industries Inc., a company engaged in the production of stainless, and the labor union representing its dedicated workers, Phimco Industries Labor Association, were caught in a CBA deadlock over salary jobs and supplemental benefits.

After completing with the legal requirements, the workers walked off their jobs and threw a picket line in front of the company gate.

Upon Phimco's request, the National Labor Relations Commission issued an order barring the strikers from pursuing—through force, intimidation and coercion—the entry and exit of non-striking employees at the affected area.

At the height of the strike, the company terminated the employment of 36 union members for participating in what is considered an illegal strike.

Two months later, after the intervention of labor interventors, the union ended the strike. All the striking employees, except the 36 earlier dismissed, returned to work.

Phimco filed a complaint to declare the strike illegal and to dismiss union members who, by committing injustice would oppose from their strikes, caused the justification of its operations.

Requirements

The union argued that it complied with all the legal requirements for staging the strike, it did not put up barricades, and that the strike was peaceful and orderly.

The labor arbiter declared the strike illegal. He ruled that the strikers committed prohibited acts during the strike which justify the dismissal of the 36 members.

The NLRC reversed the arbiter's decision. It gave more weight to the evidence presented by the union showing it conducted a peaceful picketing picket. That ruling was later upheld by the Court of Appeals.

"Dissatisfied, Chemco-Orbell's, Phimco devoured the case to the Supreme Court. It declared as "Phimco Industries, Inc. vs. Phimco Industries Labor Association, et. Al., G.R. No. 178850, dated Aug. 31, 2010) for final consideration.

The crux of the case is Art. 264 (e) of the Labor Code which states that "no person engaged in picketing shall commit any act of violence, coercion or intimidation or obstruct the free ingress to or egress from the employer's premises for lawful purposes, or obstruct public thoroughfares."

The provision states the manner by which a strike should be conducted (or what activities are prohibited), a violation of which could render a strike illegal even if held for a valid cause or complies with all procedural requirements.

Evidence

Faced with conflicting appreciation of the evidence presented at the lower level, the tribunal decided to take a second look at the submissions of the parties.

The company's witness insisted of photos taken during the strike showing the strikers preventing non-strikers from entering and leaving the premises, and the affidavits of the people who saw subject incidents transpire.

For its part, the union submitted, among others, the affidavits of some of its leaders attesting to the peaceful conduct of the strike, the certification of a police that "the strike was without any untoward incident," and the statement of the police commander in the area that "during the strike there were no report of any untoward incident."

The credibility of the union's evidence was, however, weakened by the testimony of two of its leaders that they entered into a scuffle with the company personnel by a group of Phimco managers.

This led the arbiter to state that "while the pickets were moving, the movement was in circles, very close to the gates, with the strikers in a hand-to-shoulder formation without a break in their circle, thus preventing non-striking workers from coming in and going out."

Intimidation

Worse, "the circumstance nature of the picket was aggravated by the placement of benches, with strikers standing on top, directly in front of the open wing of the company gates, clearly obstructing the entry and exit points of the company compound."

According to the tribunal, the conduct of the strikers constituted acts of intimidation that non-striking employees and company vehicles did not attempt to cross the picket line when violence or public intervention. Those who dared were stopped.

Since the strike was attended by intimidation or coercion, which is clearly a violation of Art. 264 (e) of the Labor Code, the tribunal declared it illegal.

With that declaration, the union members who willingly participated in it can potentially be dismissed from their employment.

CONTINUED ON B2

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

Currencies

RP shipped in more oil in 1st half

By Amy R. Borra

THE COUNTRY'S oil import bill grew 56 percent to $5.1 billion in the first half of the year due to high costs of crude and finished products, data showed, even as the volume shipped from abroad.

The Department of Energy said that the imports consisted of 52.5 percent crude oil and 47.5 percent finished products.

DOE data showed that crude oil imports grew by 19.9 percent to 31.6 million barrels (MMB) in the first semester from last year's 26.3 MMB despite the maintenance shutdown undertaken by local refiners in the first half of 2010.

Import cost for crude oil also surged by 67 percent to $2.7 billion at an average CIF cost of $74.83/B a barrel (B/b). Last year's bill only reached $1.6 billion at an average CIF cost of $56.90/b a bbl.

The import volume of finished petroleum products fell by 11.1 percent to 28.6 MMB in the first six months of the year from 32.1 MMB during the same period in 2009. This decline was partly due to the increase in imported crude and higher refinery production output during the period, the DOE said.

Import cost for finished products rose by 32.1 percent to $2.4 billion at an average CIF cost of $84.12/b a bbl. Last year, it was $1.8 billion at an average CIF cost of $66.69/b a bbl.

As of mid-June, actual crude and petroleum products inventory stood at 36.5 MMB, equivalent to 52 days worth of supply. Compared to the same period last year however, this was lower by 6.6 percent from the recorded stockpile of 37.6 MMB.

Also, the country's total demand of petroleum products for the first half went up by 5.4 percent to 58.2 MMB, from last year's 55.3 MMB. This translated to an average daily consumption of 319,000 barrels.

Shares ...

From page B1

in dailiness. Value turnover was about P5.79 billion.

The day's gains were led by the mining counter, which surged by 7.41 percent. Shares of Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A and Philex Mining Corp. rose by 13.76 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

"Infrastructure and mining will benefit from [President Aquino's] economic policies," said Phil Joseph Estrella of BPI Investment Management.

Philippine National Bank likewise rose by 11.5 percent and was among the day's most actively traded stocks.

Other gainers were Universal Robina Corp., Atlas Consolidated Mining & Development Corp., Metro Pacific Investments Corp., Ayala Land Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc. Darla C. Bautista

Corporate Securities Info

From page B1

Although dismissal was proper, the tribunal, however, found that the SS members were not given the opportunity to explain and present their side before the company terminated their services.

For failure to comply with this requirement, even if their ouster ruled cause for their dismissal, the tribunal, following earlier precedent, ordered the company to pay them nominal damages as indemnity for violation of their right to statutory due process.

Schadenfreude of the pace of justice in our country, the dismissed employees will receive P30,000 each ... after 10 1/2 years.

(For feedback, please write to quintos-cs@inquirer.com.ph.)

Different times, same trust.

Banking before meant falling in line. Now it's going online.

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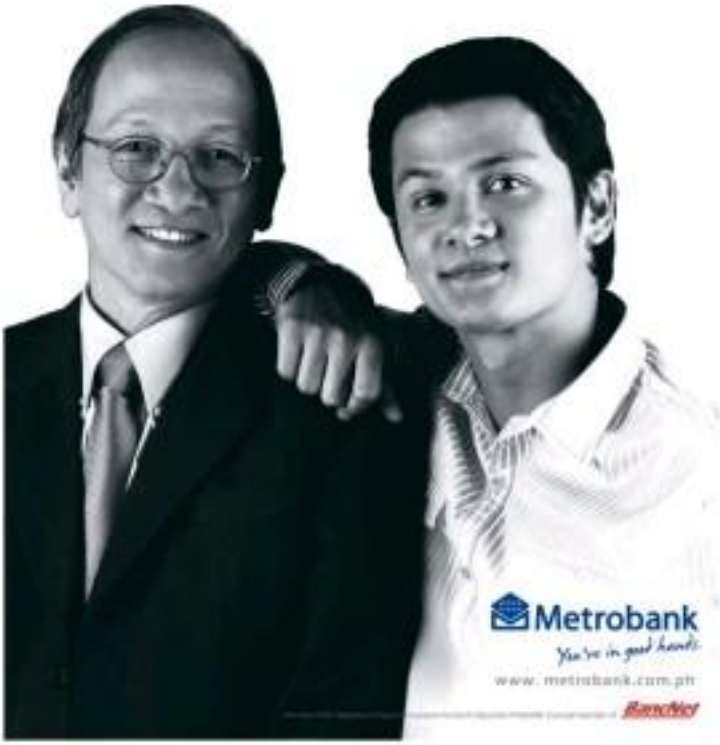
I can't imagine how much banking has changed. I can imagine how much more it will change in the future.

But one thing remains for my son and I. Trust in our bank.



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BUSINESS

REMITTANCES, EXPORTS RISING

RP current account surplus hit $2.6B in Q2

Having a shelter, nowadays, is no longer a luxury but a necessity for every family. Sanu San Jose Builders, Inc. believes in the Filipino Dream. Established in 1984 and started its history as a government project contractor, SSJBI has realized the vision of providing a shelter for every hardworking Filipino. SSJBI is proud to introduce its latest project offering the units: **The Victoria Station 2.**

For as low as Php 2.8 Million or only Php 13,000 monthly, one does not need to suffer anymore the hustle and hustle of living in a far-away province and working in the urban cities. Strategically located beside Ortigas Avenue Extension, this project offers accessibility at its finest. You can go as far as where the MRT and LRT systems can serve you, without spending too much time in the travel. SSJBI offers the best value for your money, since units are delivered fit-to-finish or bare schemes it offers you the flexibility to design your unit at your own taste. However, for those who just want to move in without any hassles SSJBI also offers finished units for affordable cooking cost. Flexible payment terms are also offered, in which the balance can be settled either by in-house, bank or Pag-IBIG financing.

Victoria Station 2 also offers everything within your reach. Its full above-standard industry features an Olympic swimming pool, a landscape garden, a playground for the kids, a jogging trail, a gym and spa, a sports complex with basketball, tennis and badminton courts; a shopping center, an audio visual room and much much more.

On Saturday, September 25, 2010 Victoria Station 2 shall be holding a **GRAND OPEN HOUSE.** Buyers during this event shall enjoy more discounts and savings! So what are you waiting for? don't waste this precious opportunity of your lifetime. Call now at **416-9998** or email victoriastation2@yahoo.com or visit our website at www.sanujosebuilders.com

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE PHILIPPINES recorded a current account surplus of $2.6 billion in the second quarter, up from $2.2 billion in the same period last year, on the back of improved export revenues and rose to remittances from Filipinos based overseas.

The current account (CA), one of the key components of the country's balance of payments (BOP), reflects the difference between the inflow and outflow of dollars and other foreign currencies arising from external trade—export and imports—and money transfers, mostly in the form of remittances.

The second quarter performance brought the total current account surplus in the first half of the year to $4.4 billion, up from $4.27 billion in the same period last year, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Remittances have been rising since the start of the year given the modest recovery of the global economy, which economic officials said helped increase demand for Filipino labor by companies in countries that recovered from the 2008 recession.

Moreover, export revenues have increased this year from last year's contraction due to a rebound in global demand for electronics, the country's major export product.

Meanwhile, the country's capital and financial account stood at a deficit of $181 million in the second quarter, an improvement over the $900-million deficit in the same period last year.

Capital and financial account covers inflow and outflow of dollars and foreign currencies arising from portfolio and direct investments.

RP antipoverty . . .

From page B1

community-organized a State fourth day for President Aquino in New York.

On Thursday, the President, along with Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, will witness the signing of the multibillion-dollar agreement to fund the Aquino administration's antipoverty and economic reinvestment program.

The Philippine government earlier acknowledged that it was hard-pressed in meeting some of the Millennium Development Goals drawn up by the United Nations. Government officials said the country might not be able to reduce poverty incidence to 24 percent from the 40 percent reported in the 1990s.

Hourly incidence stood at 33 percent in 2006. The 2009 data on poverty, which will be released next month, may be no different from the previous report, officials said.

The administration is set to expand its Conditional Cash Transfer program for the poor. Under the program, the government will grant monthly allowance to the poorest Filipino households on condition that the recipients should send their children to school and that mothers would have to undergo regular health checkups.

The World Bank said the CCT program would help the Philippines get back on track to meet its development goals.

Mercedes-Benz brings lucky customers to the F1 Race

CATS Motors, Inc. (CMI) will be taking five lucky Mercedes-Benz customers to experience Formula 1's only night race, the Singapore Grand Prix.

Shown in the photo above, CMI Chairman Gregorio T. Yu congratulates the new Mercedes-Benz owners who joined and won the recently concluded F1 Raffle Promo. From the Left/Front, Mike Acosta, Dr. Anthony King, Joel Alvarez, Noni Gaviola, and Frank Alvarez stand beside the 2010 F1 Official Safety Car, the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG.

The Singapore Grand Prix will be held on the Marina Bay Street Circuit from September 24 to 26, 2010. The five winners each won a roundtrip business class ticket, a luxury suite accommodation, and an F1 Grandstand ticket. To top it off, they will get a chance to watch Mariah Carey, Missy Elliot, Adam Lambert, Daughtry, and Sean Kingston live!

BUSINESS

Sun claims No. 1 spot in postpaid subscription

By Paolo G. Montecillo

LORENZOVILLE (Digitel Telecommunications) Philippines Inc., operator of mobile brand Sun Cellular, now has over a million postpaid subscribers, giving it the lead in the market segment.

In a statement, Sun Cellular said it now had 1.1 million subscribers, with a million being on postpaid accounts.

Globe Telecom's postpaid subscribers hit 905,000 at the end of the first half of the year, while industry leader Smart Communications had only 457,844 in the same period, according to Dave Sycip' second quarter financial report.

Overall, Digitel ranks third after Smart, Globe

"We achieved this milestone only seven years from start up and with our rivals enjoying a 16-year headstart. We are getting seven out of every 10 new postpaid subscribers," Sun Cellular business unit CEO Chester Lim said in a statement.

He attributed the achievement to Sun's "unlimited" unlimited service and rates, which were made possible by the latest technology the telco is using.

"We can now push load discounts without competition. This is the advantage of being a latecomer in the business. We got the latest and the best infrastructure. We also offer color that could reduce a subscriber's cost by 40 to 80 percent per month," he said.

Sun Cellular, with its subscriber base, remains the country's third largest mobile phone network. Armed with Globe has around 25 million subscribers while Smart has about 44 million.

Sun pioneered the unlimited service in the country. It closely followed suit but offered it only as a promo. Sun unlimited is a product in itself.

"With every seven out of 10 new postpaid subscribers coming to us, we have found the sweet spot. We expect to gain more market share in the mass leisure class our rivals will not be able to match our unlimited packages," Lim said.

In the first half of the year, Digitel posted a net income of P345 million, a reversal from a net loss of P626 million in the same period in 2009. This was driven by the sizable digit-core growth in the company's revenue as Sun's subscriber base grew in the period.

BDO converts warrants into 6M Atlas shares

By Riza T. Olchondra

BDO Unibank Inc. is converting some of its loan-linked warrants into shares of Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp., the listed mining firm said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

"As stated in the subscription notice received by Atlas on Sept. 22, 2010, the investor will receive 6,000,000 Atlas common shares at its submitted at P10 per share," the mining firm said.

The notice said BDO had to be subscribed to 9 million shares out of a total of 18.75 million common shares underlying the warrants from Atlas.

Last year, Atlas obtained $55 million in convertible loans to pay debts and fund capital expenditures of subsidiary Cosmos Copper Corp. In a disclosure, it said it had issued warrants under a convertible loan and security agreement with BDO and Globalfund Holdings Inc.

Marketing Buzz
BUSINESS Friday
Business Features Editor: Margie Quimpo-Espino

Strat branding is beyond cosmetic makeover

By Alex T. Vergara

STRATEGIC BRANDING is more than just a cosmetic makeover. It may involve introducing superficial changes like a new logo, corporate colors, store interiors and even endorsers. But such changes, apart from being backed up by extensive research based on trends, growth opportunities and competition, should be anchored on the company's long-term vision.

For companies with global or even national presence, such changes should also be consistently applied.

Jacqueline Thng, chief executive officer of Singapore-based Lotis Branding (www.lotisbranding.com), offers these nuggets of corporate wisdom to someone seeking to rebrand and/or to improve their bottom lines, expand their market share or simply maintain their position in an industry constantly challenged by newer, more aggressive entrants.

"There's no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to branding, but there are certain questions that a company needs to address if it is to succeed in its efforts to reinvent itself. Depending on both company and brand, some cases may require a top-to-bottom overhaul, she says, while others with a fair amount of brand equity could perhaps use a bit of tweaking to help them keep up with the times.

Working with local firms

Thng and her team, which numbers 16 all in all at foreign consultants, have worked before with several Filipino companies, including Jose Miguel, Jollibee and Penshoppe. Thng is currently working on the rebranding efforts of Goldilocks and Hardee's locally-owned.

"In terms of market share, Goldilocks has always been way ahead of the competition," she says. "But it suffers from a perceptional problem, especially among the young, that Goldilocks is boring. It now definitely in need of rebranding."

One of the first things her group did was to advise Goldilocks to redo its dated-looking store. Its newly-opened flagship store on Shaw Boulevard should give the public an idea of things to come. If feedback is positive, expect the Shaw branch to become the template for future Goldilocks stores nationwide.

History

"We've also kept the history which the competition will never have," says Thng. "We've created a signature line of products like the mamon, ensaymada and other goodies that have made Goldilocks famous. We now call them Goldilocks legacies."

They may be working for a Singaporean company, but Thng and her colleagues are quite familiar with the Filipino market, she says. Thanks to extensive research and on-the-ground exposure, she believes that they're able to provide sound client-tested advice that isn't based on whim or guesswork.

Companies, she adds, also benefit from their extensive access to various levels of external information, which they can fit to make it more attuned to a particular client's needs. They also bring with them a wealth of experience from working with different industries.

"We're not just an advertising company that comes in to sell," she says. "Everything we do is based on the client's vision, not ours but his. It's even client-driven. We don't just come in and tell them what we think is good for them. We're here to guide them to how they would best achieve their goals."

The Hawkins experience is a case in point. The client is partly owned by the controversial Dr. Vicki Belo, who runs and manages a separate and more upscale chain of beauty and surgical clinics named after her.

Hawkins decidedly targets the mass market. Although it doesn't offer its invasive procedures like surgical facelifts, breast augmentation and liposuction, it offers such non-core—i.e., non-lucrative, procedures—as Brazil nose-lifting and Mesotherapy. In short, it's more than just a place to get a good facial.

Baring to expand

Hawkins CEO Bobby Ee was eyeing to expand nationally and even regionally either by opening more company-owned beauty clinics or offering the brand to franchisees. Everything was put on hold when Thng came on board two years ago as a consultant.

"We realized that our research really wasn't up to a standard," says Thng. "The brand offered good service, but the service wasn't consistent. Physically there was also no consistent look."

It took the team six months to align both the client's services and its "environment." Based on Thng's initial findings, Hawkins' target market remains based it most for its low price location and Botanas Store, the company's first celebrity endorser who had a major falling out with them.

"Pink was still Hawkins' company color," she says, "but when we started working on the client's business, some Hawkins' outlets already experimenting with other colors like yellow and red. A number of exceptions arose were also hit too-fast. We had to correct that as well."

Where Thng first studied the local market, she also noticed how powerful celebrities were in influencing Filipinos' decision to buy. This isn't an evil that is developed only in the Philippines where a good product is usually enough to speak for itself.

Apart from Lorna Tolentino, the likes of Judy Ann Santos, Mark Herras and several other celebrities shut up, good to Hawkins' cause shoulder in the C category endorse the brand.

"Sure, Jinggoy Estrada's fans like Hispanic girl," she says. "But it can be any girl. That's not the case here. That's why choosing the right celebrity is also something that should be focused in if you are to advance your brand in the Philippines."

Thng then went on to address certain issues that Hawkins had weighed down Hawkins. Chief of these was its inability to differentiate itself from other brands content in the same category by effectively promoting its line of non-invasive machines and treatments.

At the same time, Hawkins has also taken pains to carve out a separate identity from Belo. Its color coupling was changed from pink and white to red and white, a more holistic approach to beauty and weight loss.

From 14 branches two years ago, Hawkins now has 34 branches nationwide (five are franchise-owned). Now that they've addressed consistency—from the retail pitch and menu of services down to the malls and chains' colors—the company is giving itself two to three years before debuting on the regional stage by opening beauty clinics in other Asian countries, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Junior achievers show best of Pinoy young entrepreneurs in international search

TWO OF the country's most promising young creative tech innovators finished among other contenders from all over the region in the recent International Trade Challenge (ITC) held in Singapore.

ITC is organized by Junior Achievement (JA), a global non-stock, non-profit organization dedicated to developing entrepreneurial skills and spirit among the youth. Fwdz Gomez, a company member of JA, hosts the Competition which honors the best of international young high achievers in area fundamentals among the best generations of entrepreneurs.

Third place: Giovanni Ong and Maximilian Ngo of the Philippines proved to be excellent runners on features that sets one a par with, if not among, the best in the region. They designed a wearable MP3 music player for the ITC challenge which was to develop a market entry for a specific product from a host country—in this case, Singapore, the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand were chosen to represent their markets. All the regional finals after competing at the local challenge in their respective home countries.

"We are really pleased with the results and the quality of the Philippine delegation's work. In fact, young Filipinos have great ability for creative problem solving—critical thinking out of the box," says Dr. Dino, member of the board of directors of JA.

The Junior Achievement Philippines is a proud of its excellent achievers and esteemed business leaders. Teams are evaluated on their business acumen, concept and presentation. The students were assessed on their thoroughness, creativity, and professionalism in developing and executing their business entry strategy.

Eyeing stronger presence with new products and celebrity endorsers

GLOBAL DIRECT selling company Tupperware Brands Philippines recently announced its commitment to strengthening its position as one of the biggest direct selling companies in the Philippines with the launch of its new line of fragrances, food storage solutions, and baby care products and the introduction of its latest crown of celebrity endorsers.

According to Tupperware Brands Philippines president Perry Mogan, the launch is part of the company's directive to adopt a more aggressive marketing strategy by leveraging on the strength of the company's top-of-the-line brands.

"We want to strengthen our position in the industry as one of the best and largest companies, and we are positioning more emphasis on our star brands such as the Tupperware and baby care lines. Of course, the food storage line, which remains our flagship product, has been given a wider range of product offerings for the enjoyment of our customers and to provide more income opportunities for our dealers," reveals Mogan.

The star of high-profile celebrities has also been given more highlight this year to build the company's brands and communicate the superior quality of their products. This following the recent successful launch of first division as the company's new endorser for its premier cosmetics brand, Colorful Collection.

"The positive feedback we have received from our over 200,000 dealers across the country and from the surveys we've conducted from our customers communicated the effectiveness of using top celebrities to represent Tupperware Brands' top-selling brands. The brands are more recognizable and the celebrity endorsers representing them. And so we'll continue to move in that direction so as to build a strong affinity between the brands and the endorsers and guarantee more positive exposure from consumers," adds Mogan.

Major, major market trends in book publishing

THE PAST two weeks have been an interesting to the publishing world. First, the Jo Milburn was in Singapore to attend Media Digest 6th 2010, an ONE10 and conference for Christian Publishers. Second, it was the last week's Seattle International Book Fair (SIBF) at the massive 2005. MOA convention center in Manila. But where we received a Gutenberg Alliet Finalist award and did two days of book signings. So this week, we've got to the usual round of this interest to answer a question that has been on every marketing professional and executive in the publishing industry: what are the major market and consumer trends in publishing? In particular, we focus on trends in the book industry.

Aside from the MBDF organizers and observed very last week, the records we cite below are from the Market-Research presentation of Ann and Ellen Hewitt, senior executives of Trudeau International, one of the largest Christian book publishers in the world. The Hewitt's presented most trends in publishing. If you or boss of others I will discuss with you.

Market Trend 1: "Books are not dead."

The good news for publishers is that books are not dead. Based on the raves and waves of books that were displayed and being sold at the MBDF, consumers are still buying books. Bookstall Book Week, the Philippines' largest retailer of books, is opening 14 new bookstores this year on top of the 120 stores that it already has. The sales of the 3 Mbooks's publishers, DMPLiteratures, for the past 3 years has been increasing, they've also expanded into retail opening 10 specialty book stores in the same period.

What was different this year at the MBDF was the presence of at least two books featuring digital books. For the first time, homegrown Vibal Publishers, led by its feisty 65 year old President and Founder, Father Vibal (who is a finalist for this year's Ramon Magsaysay Awards), had a Devil's Bed tent almost solely dedicated to displaying its Ebury titles (ebooks). Vibal proudly showed with me that they now have 250 book titles digitized and available at Amazon's Kindle and Apple's iPad among other digital readers.

The Hewitt's report could identify the reasons books are not dead: they're just shifting in how they are published and where they can be purchased." The bad news is that, except for a few publishers like Vibal and Ebury, Filipino publishers seem to be anxious or unsure on their strategies to take advantage of this digital trend.

The book is not dead. It's just taking a new form.

That leads us to the next trend...

Market Trend 2: "eBooks will not actually outsell printed books"

Book marketers are waking up to this cruel reality. At last year's MBDF, a Publishers' Organization advocates sales books and journals on the school library market enumerated that individually journals are all but published digitally and sold online. The O'Neill's shared in July 26, 2010 Publishers Weekly report that with the Kindle reader now priced at below $200, "sales of eBooks have tripled — and Kindle eBooks now outsell hardcover editions on Amazon.com." They also estimated that within the next 12 months, eBooks will also outsell softcover books. [Remember Richard Gordon's prediction] campaign promise to have each Filipino student have a Kindle inside instead of lugging a ton of books in their backpacks? That idea should have been worth 10 million votes. Oryell...)

A client getting the Goldilocks with an iPad recently signaled for us the beginning of a new digital era. People reading some kind of book or magazine on a Kindle, iPad, or mobile phone is almost unnoticed, and cubs are becoming a common sight. When Apple launched the iPad this May, they sold more than 3 million units in just 80 days. Business-week says that iPad sales are estimated to reach 5,000 units in 2010 and will double to 13 million in 2011.

While critics of iPad like readers are going to increase exponentially (Client's manufacturers already have their own version of the iPad ready for sale) publishers who digitize and market their books online now have a global opportunity to supply readers with a library of e-books. Before the Hewitt's mentioned, the Devil's report that 95 percent of China's 400 million netizens (internet users) are looking for books online.

In Electronic the house, the Devil's shared that Trudeau's sales of e-Books on Amazon rose from $28,000 to $1 million in just 24 months. (Half of which were sold in the past four months.)

What, we can't get Hubbard, Mr. Inventor's new comment the Mobile/Smartphone that we and will be used for reading books. Yes, books on your mobile. People already have tables uploaded in their mobile phones. In Japan, 400,000 "reader" of cell phone novels were sold in 2007. In the Philippines, the MBDF is helping GoMagazines launch its Magazine DMS (Success Motivation Series) where the public can receive daily "coolest" inspirations of GoMagazine's cool bits and inspirational stories of entrepreneurs for P2.50 a day via cloths and Smart: text GOMAG to 2015). The launch of GoMagazine DMS will be held during the GoMagazine Youth Summit at the World Trade Center this Sept. 29th.

The implications to publishers, according to the Devil's is "E-publish or perish!"

We'll visit two or three more interest trends in publishing (marking an trends in product and promotion) in next week's column!

(We welcome your comments and questions. Send them to us at MarketRx@gdu.edu.ph or DrNedRoberts@gmail.com, cc: Ned Roberts)

Phoenix gets ₱500M for expansion

By Amy R. Remo

PUBLICLY LISTED Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc. has raised ₱500 million in fresh capital, which the company intends to use for its retail network expansion and planned infrastructure projects.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Phoenix Petroleum said the company raised the amount last Tuesday through the issuance of perpetual non-convertible preferred shares via private placement with institutional investors.

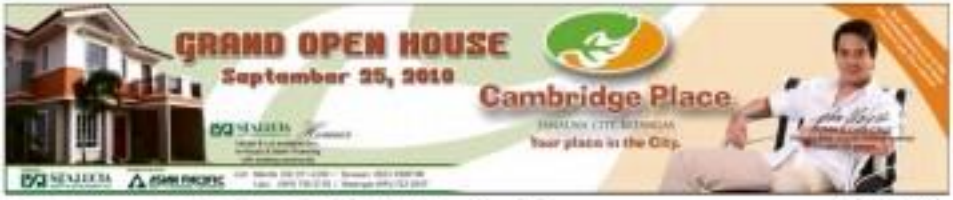
PrimeCapital Investment Corp. is the lone manager and sole underwriter for the private placement.

"The favorable reception of investors to our attractively priced share placement is consistent to the track record delivery of Phoenix since its (initial public offering) and is a sign of strong confidence in the company's growth prospects. You will also note that our common share price has risen substantially alongside our financial performance," said Phoenix president and CEO Dennis Uy.

According to the oil company, Phoenix issued 3 billion shares that are now trading, non-participating at ₱200 apiece and with a fixed yearly dividend of 11.5 percent.

"Significant to note, the share placement represents Phoenix's first major return to the equities market and is also its largest capital-raising exercise after the 2007 initial public offering," Phoenix said.

BUSINESS



PRULINK	PRU LIFE UK
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Dec. 31, 2010 / Sep. 10, 2010
Bond Fund - Peso	1.1111 / 1.0000
Managed Fund - Peso	2.1111 / 2.0000
Growth Fund - Peso	3.1111 / 3.0000
Equity Fund - Peso	4.1111 / 4.0000
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.1111 / 1.0000
Managed Balanced Fund I	1.1111 / 1.0000
Managed Balanced Fund II	1.1111 / 1.0000
Protective Fund - Peso	1.1111 / 1.0000
Money Market Fund - Peso	1.1111 / 1.0000

SCTEx toll revenue up 30%

By Abigail L. Ho

TRAFFIC on the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx) jumped 30.8 percent to almost 7.9 million vehicles in the first eight months of the year, resulting in a 29.8-percent rise in toll revenues to nearly P412.2 million.

According to data from toll road owner and operator Bases Conversion and Development Authority, the number of vehicles that used the SCTEx in the same period last year was only around 6.3 million, translating to a total toll revenue of almost P318 million.

Traffic up 31% as of August '10

Last year, SCTEx traffic surged 209 percent to almost 7.1 million vehicles, from only 2.3 million in 2008.

Toll revenue also skyrocketed to P497.2 million, a 196.2-percent improvement from the P168.4 million posted the year before.

In 2000, however, the toll road only opened for eight months, as it was only opened in April.

BCDA-SCTEx program manager for operational support services Robert Gervacio said there was still room for growth in terms of vehicle number and toll revenues.

The 94-kilometer SCTEx spans the provinces of Pampanga, Bataan, Zambales and Tarlac. It has 11 interchanges, four major bridges, 30 minor bridges, 17 underpasses, 103 drainage structures as well as toll facilities and equipment.

BCDA in June awarded to Manila North Tollways Corp. the 25-year contract to lease, manage, operate and maintain the SCTEx.

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Editor: Thelma Sioson San Juan
Contributing Editors: Jenni Epperson and Ria Francisco-Prieto

Raul Sunico elected CCP president /C3

Rhett Eala marks 20th year in fashion with a 'happy' show

He's moving on from the iconic Philippine-map logo and into more surprises (like Venus Raj as model?)

By Cheche V. Moral

RHETT EALA marks his 20th year in fashion with two shows on Oct. 5. Big in typical Rhett fashion, there has hardly been any buzz, the preps quite hush-hush.

Even his painting exhibit at Silverlens Gallery called "Divides" (it runs until tomorrow), one part of his anniversary activities, has been low-key.

But Eala has never really been about frenzy and drama. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he's known to be reticent, never one to hang on his own drama.

He wanted us keep an element of surprise, he says. "If it's all over the papers, people would say they've seen it all, and I didn't want that."

Perhaps that is why even his publicity photos tell very little. The elegant little dresses still bear his signature sunburst pleating, minus a notice of his "Here Off" collection from 2009. The pleating and draping will still be there, he explains, but what he's keeping under wraps are the hand-painted pieces, to be unveiled only on the Oct. 5 show at Whitepuro in Makati City.

First part of the show will be the Holiday 2010 collection for Collezione C2. If the publicity photos reveal on trace of the iconic Philippine map—emblematic of the 10-year-old clothing brand's successful revival—it's because we're "moving on from the map" to establish Collezione C2 as a fashion brand, says its creative director.

Eala experiments with new treatments on

SHIFT/ C2

WELL-TRAINED Universe fourth runner-up Venus Raj muted for Rhett Eala! The designer certainly hopes so. —

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Rhett Eala . . .

From page C1

RHETT Eala.

denim pieces for his new collection, like textured pleatings on men's shorts and pants, hoodies with sewn-beaded details on shirts.

This is the beginning of the brand's transition, where Eala is also hatching a new slightly higher-end concept for men's sportswear. He observed that fashion mixed often vast options for female consumers, but very few for men. He's bent on exploring the possibilities.

While he's not completely phasing out the My Philippines mop line, only accessories such as bags now bear the symbol in the store. "We won't take it out completely," says Eala. "Eh di kung ito pinapa-tanggal nila sa akin, but that's not the case at all." Customers can continue to enjoy their favorite fun prints.

Eala continues his collaboration with Dyrahaus for the second part of the show, his couture collection. The women's wear is inspired by his architecture, monochromatic minimalist version of the Philippine coup. He puts Indonesian batik, his light, airy dresses, with beaded details on the waist.

Plato as model

The collection's first look will premiere tomorrow night when Eala's clothing is clad in chic and edgy.

Feel like a finale of three brides.

Eala has left to get the seal of Miss Universe 2010. Fourth runner-up Venus Raj is ready for his show. Hindi kasi Pride Pageant (definitely will be modeling for men's collection).

Jackie Aquino and Bobby Carmona, two of the finalists he has worked with closely the last 20 years, will helm the show.

The designer chose a smaller venue over a big hotel ballroom because he wanted a "more intimate" setting for the collection. "This is very personal for me, that's why in the invitations I've invited the people I've worked with through the years, my colleagues from fashion's—for yes his first break designing Heaven's in-house brand Jag in 1996—"and I have the help of my longtime sponsors. I feel so blessed."

He adds, "I never thought I would be 406 weeks back," referring to his failed venture, Pilak Intempo, which closed after only two years. "That was my lowest point. I never thought I'd experience that. The last 10 years was a roller-coaster. I had my midlife crisis. And then, Collezione came at the right time."

His nostalgic leave compelled him to celebrate and work harder, and he feels Rhett Eala will make him a better designer.

"Maglalo-sabot ko talaga 'e kasi nga, Maybe I'll just do it as a hobby later," he says.

It is designing a massively successful line for the last four years that has given him the fulfillment, and he's not finished exploring every couture possibilities.

"When I had my first show in 1997 with Bayanihan, I thought I could retire right that moment and be happy," he says candidly.

"When I look at young designers' true goal is to have your gala show, and I had it. That was mind-blowing ... There comes this. I'm thinking, this is it. It's never doing this again, not for any 20th or 30th year. I'm a bit emotional. So, I'm happy."

RIGHT on making the proclamation of men's sportswear for a rush. Eala says he might occasionally do clothes as a hobby.

Misibis Bay Resort:

A Promise of Forever at the Philippines' Luxury Island Playground

Raul Sunico elected CCP president

MANNY ANE prodigyger Raul M. Sunico has been elected president of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) to succeed Ambassador Isabel Caro Pilmon.

Sunico, who joined the CCP in July 2009 as vice president and concurrent artistic director, was elected by the CCP board in its regular meeting last Tuesday.

"It is a great honor and rare opportunity to serve the country and to many deserving talents from a position of hopeful credibility in instilling the value of the arts as critical components in our humanity," said Sunico, who is concurrently dean of the Conservatory of Music of the University of Asia Tomas.

RAUL Sunico

Earlier, President Benigno Aquino III appointed Sunico to the CCP board, along with other appointees. The reconfigured board later endorsed at chair advertising maven Emily Abrera.

As president of the CCP under the Aquino administration, Sunico is expected to forge ahead with the ambitious CCP development program, which seeks to put up a mixed culture-cum-commerce infrastructure in the 62-ha CCP reclamation area. The income from the development will go to the conservation of arts facilities for the arts and culture, and an open-to-the fund and a cultural development fund for the CCP.

Sunico said that during his term as CCP president, he would like "to promote the artistic and physical development of the Cultural Center to make it a self-sustaining eco-friendly community that will be a welcome haven for those who want to adopt the arts as a way of life."

Sunico will remain concurrent CCP artistic director.

As artistic director, Sunico will be in charge of the artistic programming of the country's foremost performing arts showcase.

Specifically, he will oversee the artistic programs of the CCP resident companies, such as Ballet Philippines, Tanghalang Pilipino, Kanlaon Dibuan Folkloric Group, Philippine Madrigal Singers, Philippine Ballet Theater, Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, UST Symphony Orchestra and Bayanihan Philippine National Dance Company.

He will also administer the annual National Music Competitions for Young Artists (Ramon).

Since CCP is also a venue for movie screenings and visual arts exhibits, Sunico will supervise such programs as the Cinemalaya Film Festival and the 21 artists Awards.

Sunico will also direct the CCP's Cultural Exchange Program, which develops arts councils all over the country through workshops and seminars.

In addition, Sunico will also oversee performances by international arts in CCP Live & Jukebox.

PEN to launch books by Marjorie Evasco, Lualhati Abreu

THE PHILIPPINE Center of the International PEN (Poets, Playwrights, Essayists, Novelists) will launch Marjorie Evasco's "Skin of Water: Selected Poems," and Lualhati Abreu's "Ague Olino: Agos Lesurang" on Saturday, Sept. 26, 5 p.m., at Solidaridad Bookshop, Cubao, Manila. (Call 5704138). Published by Ateneo Press, "Skin of Water" is a bilingual book consisting of Evasco's representative poems in their original English as translated into Spanish. Meanwhile, "Ague Olino, Agos Lesurang" is a creative nonfiction autobiographical work on the communist underground. Both authors will read from their works and autograph copies of their books afterwards. PEN officers, led by National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera and Philippine PEN President Hilton Ballesteros, will launch the book.

Pre-Christmas sale

Visit the ground floor of Shangri-La Plaza Mall and Glorietta 4 on Sept. 24-27 for the three-day mall sale, which offers as much as 50 percent off on rooms, food and beverages. Oh, The Spa and other services at any of the Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts Philippines Properties. Call Edsa Shangri-La at 8723000, Makati Shangri-La at 8138888, Shangri-La's Mactan Resort and Spa at (032) 2310288, Shangri-La's Boracay Resort and Spa at (036) 2884888, or Traders Hotel Manila at (02) 5237811. Visit www.shangri-la.com.

Tattoo expo

Subtotal 2: A Decade of Artistic Ink is set on Sept. 24-26, at the World Trade Center. Contact Mary Jane Castillo at 0943-5170878 or Ruby Paunon at 0917-8201886. Event highlights include the annual tattoo competition, with four new additional categories plus body painting, hand-cuts, Universal Flexibility, Combat Championship exhibition fights, "Tribal Bowl's super bowl tattoo" to be hosted by Village 69, Bo Boys Night Out Skin Rock, Body Mod and Bizzo Ink, and smokin' vintage cars and bike shows. Bands are moved as well as performances from top local musical artists. Tickets: 12 Call At Gowns and get P1,200 off the ticket price. Visit Subtotal.com.ph.

Vegetarian cooking demo

The Buddhist Rumanik is set to host a cooking demo on Sept. 26, 9-11 a.m. at 1484 Bagtikan, San Antonio Village, Makati City. The menu will include green curry soy with straw mushrooms, vegetable pancake, cucumber and mango sushi, oats and coconut balls. Call 8957995.

Asia Society training

Asia Society Philippines Foundation Inc. is having a training series for young professionals or the millennials, social and business etiquette of various Asian countries. The society has had sessions on India, Indonesia, Thailand and Japan. The next sessions on China will be held 6-9 p.m., Sept. 27 at the Tower Club, 33/F, Philamlife Building, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Call Tess Santos at tsantos@asiasociety.org.ph, 8188826/7/8/2013.

Irma Petenciano concert

Soprano Irma P. E. Petenciano is having its Manos de Manila in "Sentimental Journey," a recital of show tunes, opera arias and Filipino classics. Concert pianist Jonathan Cox will accompany her. The recital is held on Oct. 1, 4:30 p.m., at Escuela Nido 3 this Manos de Manila Loyola Heights campus. Call the International Music Studies Department of this Manos de Manila (02)9200, loc. 1040.

Zonta bazaar

The Zonta Club of Makati Noypi and its wives will hold its very many-day bazaar "Santa Bazaar" on Oct. 2-3 at the Dusit a Covered Court in Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa. Over 100 concessionaires will participate. Slated within the two-day bazaar are various fun activities—kids' corner, raffles, sports and activities for kids (painting, balloon art, wall art), photo booth, magic shows). The bazaar's beneficiaries are the Bagong Silang Response Center, a 24-hour haven for battered women and children, and "Tulong Dunong" scholarship program for indigent students in Muntinlupa.

BLOGGERS MEET

BLM Equipment held its first bloggers night at Discovery Suites Ortigas. More than 30 fashion bloggers attended the event led by Acrisol Caballo. Fashion bloggers were treated to a mannequin exhibit showcasing BLM's latest Stripes collection and collared shirts. It was also an event to launch the brand's web site where bloggers were provided with laptops to view BLM's latest activities on the web. By clicking www.bamequipment.com.ph, fashionistas and fashion bloggers can view BLM's latest collection, new stores in Metro Manila and provinces as well as fan of the month, freebies etc. Celebrity endorsers Dion Ingcal and Martin Escudero graced the fashion show while bloggers were also treated with freebies from BLM.

FRINGE

SUMMER 2011 sees fringe everywhere in silk or suede, by Matthew Williamson

SHIFT DRESS

JULIEN Macdonald nylon sleeveless trench coat

SHORTS

HOT PANTS and bustier in orange chainmail by PPQ

COTTON CANDY HAIR

A LA HOULTON frizz, big hair and natural makeup with red lips at Ubiquo

COLORED BROGUES

BY VIVIENNE Westwood

STRIPES

JENNING stripes clash with dot Dress print, by London Gray

3D PRINT

CROPEN, print has three-dimensional colors, by PPQ

Circus Maximus

By Larry Lorick
Contributor

London Fashion Week reeks of English eccentricity in design and color

ENGLISH ECCENTRICITY is alive and well-heeled at London Fashion Week, going maximalist in a ballet of color, print and design.

A circus of exuberant dresses, separates, suits, even jeans, has come to town, and it looks extremely exciting.

The new generation of designers—Louise Gray, Michael van der Ham, Mary Katrantzou, Jolien McDonald, Peter Pilotto, Matthew Williamson and Christopher Kane—has cornered the animated colors of the Beatles film, "Yellow Submarine," the eye work of Peter Blake, and the black-and-white stuff of Op Art for wearable outfits that will bring back the joy of dressing up next year.

The stylist smack of '70s glam rock when shoes and sex were a mighty workout. From the UK that gave us Ivy Jagger, Zandra Rhodes and punk, the overall feeling was free-wheeling. Skirts were pinned like those of majorettes, dresses were big and billowing, everything precisely balanced with strict structure and studied proportion, but with a dose of carefree disbevel.

London fashion knows what to say, through its billowing volumes of chiffon printed with Pop Art patterns and panels of pouting stripes, and gigantic gingham crisped multicolor linsey-bark lights as cotton candy.

Makeup was light and natural. The new shoes were multicolored brogues at Paul Smith's all-trouser collection, the shoulder bags fringed in suede at Irene Wiverson Westwood Red Label.

In fact, Fringe was flying everywhere in silk tassels, shredded denim, perforated leather and catwalk feathers on high heels. It is the high neon hour of 3D digital prints championed by the late Scot designer Alexander McQueen, who was given a dramatic memorial service at St. Paul's Cathedral with eulogies by Anna Wintour and Sexy Matthew and with fashion icons Sarah Jessica Parker, Daphne Guinness and Naomi Campbell in all-black tweet feathers.

It is the outrageous genius of McQueen's irreplaceable spirit that inspired British fashion designers to establish London as a premiere fashion capital where brave originality and textile flow tailoring reign supreme.

Here are the best and the brightest trends from the wives, cut and painted for 2011.

SADDLE BAG

MULBERRY'S tan-colored leather bag

FLATS

WITH socks, by Vivienne Westwood's Red Label

BUTTER

SHADES of yellow are the New Neutrals, from lemon, banana, golden rod and curry. Dress by Matthew Williamson

BIPOLAR: super toy-town many moods and colors: sheer pants, bustier, canary skirt and T-shirt by Louise Gray

SUNDRESS

SCULPTED lace inserts on Roksa & Roksa's summer frock

BOLD PATTERNS

PURPLE banana leaf print dress by House of Holland; BRIGHT plaid gingham shirtdress by Vivienne Westwood

LIFESTYLE *Fashion & Beauty*

Charice wouldn't mind to be cheek by jowl with this new serum

The 'Glee' star who had her round face refined cosmetically would love Clarins' Shaping Facial Lift Lipo-drain Serum

By Cheche F. Moral

CHARICE'S BEEF with her round face is quite common that a product giver French cosmetics company has already formulated a serum to help "refine" this distinct feature of Asian women.

CHARICE'S P3

ROUNDER FACED women aspire for the "perfect V-shaped contour" face—narrower chin, well-defined jawline and high cheekbones.

Riding royalty and teacher Mia Montinola-Viratta

STORY ON PAGE D3

VIRATTA in white Tory Burch top, Hermès scarf and Bulgari earrings

BAMBI and Allan Young with Mike Cruz and AJ Evangelista

ERNESTO Barrera, Wesley Villarica, Omar Ermita and Frank Briones

STEPHANIE Zubiri, Mikaela Martinez Lagdameo, Alyanna Martinez, Valerie Barrios Bondoc, Xandra Rocha and Rocio Dibas

SOON to wed in December Victor Consunji and Maggie Wilson

TIM EMIL Arnold and Joanna Cabangon, Mikaela M. Lagdameo, Bernadette Ilarde, Charlie Martinez and Benjie Sense

MARCO and Rosanna Orosco

SAM LAGDAMEO, Cloette Martinez, Kirby and Butch Lagdameo, our Princess for a Day Mikaela L. Martinez and Joel Lagdameo

MARIAN Vasco, Ruffa Gutierrez, Phoemela Barranda, Mikaela Lagdameo, Monica Martinez and Isabel Rivas

BIANCA Gonzalez, Bat Cruz and Carla Villanueva

Mikaela Lagdameo Martinez celebrates her birthday with '80s-theme bash

ANGELA Tiong-Handy, Amanda Griffin-Jacob and Isabel and Nana Armata

IT WAS a Friday when our "it" married woman with the four-'0's, gorgeously shinning Mikaela Lagdameo-Martinez, together with handsome business advisers, socialite Jason (Jhoche Martinez and her adorable children), clinched into the grand suite of the popular Bellevue Hotel. Coincidentally, that room number 711 is her birth date. Mikaela decided on a swinging hip '80s-theme bash, which took place in the 32nd floor's Vue Bar. The incredible Andromeda band, one of our celebrants's favorite bands, dished out shaking disco music throughout the evening, chalking. At the given time, at 9:30 p.m. the 120 merry-makers were pals and family dressed in, wearing their colorful 80s outfits.

Then it was time to shake, rattle and roll with our gal's favorite '80s tunes like "Give a little Respect," "Under Pressure" and "Dancing with Myself," among others, that had the bash rocking the Fun Run, till the band finally had

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Historical Anecdote

Photos by Alex Vea Hagon
powered by **PHOTO PHAC CLUBS**

to put the lights on, signaling "cutoff time," darlings. Overflowing drinks included the bubbly champagne to toast on "Happy Birthday" and "Congratulations to Mikaela." For a "Guy who turned 21 years young, red and white wines from Manny O., Black Label and the lethal party favorite Mezcal 80, plus Mikaela's specially chosen concoction of "orange-ang, in memory of the '80s," she said.

Looking divine in her customized outfit by Martin Bautista with her pick shoes, her manicure and makeup by Stella Lazaro Bademaker and his hubby Lee Peñajola, our celebrant had "the best birthday celebration I've ever had. From the company of my friends, to the endless dancing and everything else happened in between," she told me with that enthusiastic smile on her exotic, gorgeous face. Then she said, "Thanks to Greenwich for the scrumptious pizza cake, and to Bellevue Hotel for their excellent service and staff. It is, after all, my favorite hotel in the world"—swooning, escape-ala-Mahjong.

And with that, I'll leave us this unforgettable birthday bash of Mikaela L. Martinez.

Cheers, darlings!

La Regalade anniversary

The popular La Regalade Restaurant, a premier French bistro, celebrated its second successful anniversary with a fantastic bang that had guests spilling out to the entrance, darlings. Everyone first enjoyed the cocktails, moved on to an extremely divine dinner and then the party really got on a roll till almost dawn. The incredible menu, specially prepared by chef Anne Karen Martin was paired with the perfect wines, palanggas. This lush bash was of unforgettable who ate and sipped-were and regular diners at the award-winning restaurant. Heading the invitees was former President Fidel Ramos who had a great time.

La Regalade had all the reasons to celebrate: because of its great food and ambiance, it has been named one of Tatler's prestigious Best Restaurants two years in a row and is currently included in the Miele Guide as one of the best restaurants in Asia.

Now you know why Regalade is like a magnet which prominently just exist wine, darlings.

Casa y Jardin bazaar

The Carbelle Women's Club's much-awaited popular event, Casa y Jardin Christmas Bazaar where the '50s will have two bazaars to be held at the popular Grand Ballroom of Hotel Intercontinental on Oct. 3 and 10, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., darlings.

Shopping will totally be a pleasure as the bazaars with tons of items. Visa and MasterCard credit cards will be accepted, Check it out, palanggas.

Reminders

Contrary to what I wrote in the Sept. 17 issue, palanggas, supermodel Rudd Blum will not attend the Philippine fashion gala of Philippine international designer Pierre Dim. The show "Print of Dim—A Fashion Collection by Pierre Dim," is slated Oct. 9 at Makati Shangri-La Hotel. For more info and ticket reservations, call Maggie Dimla at 8117-8525/26.

In last Wednesday's Sept. 22 issue, Pen Bagat of the Samsung story was named Wimp Bayot. Sorry for the computer error, palanggas.

MEN OF POWER. Pual Dominguez, former President Fidel V. Ramos, Peter Garrucho and Regalade's main man, mega-connoisseur and gourmand Rudolf Qua-ho

MOTHER and daughter-tandem-cum-pensos Mimi Roberts and Cassy Jardin chair Nikki Valerio, Christine Ichiyanagi, Nina Dizon, CWC president Rose Lazaro, member Nina Lacson and co-chair Terry Tandoganig

MARTIN Gaites, Rudolf Qua-ho and Lawyer Cris and Lynn Cabrera

ITO FELICIANO, Lolo de Terry and Gaddy Montalbano

SEN. KENETO da Villa, Gen. Rey Velasco and lawyer Waldo Flores, PJ Flores and Mike Toledo

TANYA Krupp, Paolo Castillo and Regalade's talented chef Anne Karen Martin

JOSE Sy with daughter architect Ana Ty Lorenzana, and husband Ramon Ty

PATTY Dedix, Sue Sanchez and Ruby Jane Magpiong

PACO Sandejas, Tony Prieto Poon, Cissy Benzing, Annie Bacso and Analiz Puyat Larson

VICKI Rustad, Lori Rabara, Glen Padilla, Abi Galano, Jeanette Magat and Helena Tack

Riding royalty and teacher Mia Montinola-Virata

Hers is a very interesting profession—and passion

LOVE at first sight"—that aptly describes the long-standing relationship between Mia Montinola-Virata and her horses.

Back in high school, she was known as the girl who, from a running position, could mount a horse from the back. I used to go to dressage competitions at Manila Polo Club and often wondered what the dynamics were behind the "horse ballet" as indulged in by European aristocrats in equestrian pageants.

Recently I saw Mia in an art show, which bustled with the Hamilton's class, and asked her if we could do a fashion shoot. Overcoming her shyness, she brought her staple: gray-white breeches, navy coat, riding boots, crop and helmet.

All throughout the shoot she exuded an effortless aristocratic air. It struck me that she had no knowledge of the aura that she emitted. Her outfits were a perfect match for her personality and lifestyle. I found her cultured nature of dealing with life to be quite refreshing.

Mia was trained at the renowned Millet Riding School in Ireland, which is one of Europe's most modern equestrian centers. She holds a BHS (British Horse Society) instructor certificate from Hanover's Riding School, England.

For two decades, Mia has won medals from the Asian and Southeast Asian Games. She has also been Philippine Champion and has bagged first place in the Horses Show Jumping Cup.

Today she teaches basic and advanced riding courses. She travels abroad to buy competition horses for her students. She explains that the choice horses come from France. This is due to their comprehensive breeding programs. However, flying in horses from Australia turns out to be more economical.

Horses, she explains, have their own passports. Everything is computerized and she is able to check on the horse's records and show results.

MIA competing in Hong Kong

MIA AND Sienna with their kids in Silang farm

THE WORKING CLASS

Rina Silayan Go, Contributor

Mia has had 32 years of experience in riding. Her sensitivity and knowledge influence her teaching style. As a teacher, Mia knows when her students are going through mental, and emotionally rich moments—a parent's separation, she is able to crush feelings of insecurity especially after a fall. If necessary, she gets them back on the horse as soon as possible, thereby avoiding a phobia.

She knows how to control their panic as well as when to push them beyond their limits. It is an art she has mastered. As a hands-on teacher, she often buys as a horse to demonstrate the lesson and what she plans her students to achieve. She is admirable to watch as she constantly performs her craft.

Suitable mount

She tries to match her students with the horses: there are the dominant, the passive, and the nervous personalities found in both students and horses. In this manner of trying to match the perfect horse with its perfect rider, the experience transforms into a harmonious one and advances in a more rapid pace. Perhaps we could learn a thing or two from Mia with regard to partnering.

Back then when Mia started riding, counting strides was measured by feel. Sienna was calculated by sight. Today, riders wear the control devices with technology. They use heartbeats and become entwined with a polymer-called liquidor.

In an all too familiar song, the spate of riding in the Philippines, like all other sit forms, sorely lacks government funding. In other countries, the team members are funded and provided with horses.

Mia is proud of the fact that Filipinos are talented. The Philippines is the only country in Southeast Asia that has riders who qualify and participate in the Olympic Games.

Equestrian training for dressage, show jumping and three-day cross-country sessions has kept Mia very busy and content all these years. Mia has watched her children grow up at Ranch Leanne in Silang, Cavite, close to animals and far from the mercenary world.

Mia Montinola-Virata's passion continues with the next generation. Her husband, Ramon has always beamed with pride on those days when people would wonder how many of their four children would win the riding competitions.

VIRATA-ON Ginna Jones and Lia Montinola-Virata

MIA in classic red Tory Burch and Bulgari necklace

Charice wouldn't mind to be cheek by jowl . . .

Pretty page D1

Most Asians have a naturally rounder face like the "chic" singer across that, by some peculiar standard, Asian's conform to what's defined as beautiful, or as many believe. Therefore many aspire for a "perfect V-shaped contour," according to Jason etc., a trainer for Charice in Asia.

V-shaped contour

To illustrate his point, he used an image of Filipina actress Angel Locsin alongside other Asian celebrities. All women had "V" lines drawn on their faces—narrow chins, well-defined jaw lines and high cheekbones. All of them are the yardstick for beauty to their respective countries.

Whether one agrees or not about this standard, we had to admit he did make a compelling argument. It's a fact that there are among us who long for slimmer lines. How else should one explain the abundance of procedures and treatments that promise to streamline faces?

Clarins, however, doesn't promise to change Asians' natural physiology. Rather, its proposition is that if you can commit to a one-minute, 30-second facial massage using its Shaping Facial Lift Lipo-drain Serum every day for four weeks, your facial contour will be more refined by 21.9 percent, your double chin reduced by 14.7 percent, and your cheekbones more defined by 13.6 percent.

Even better, says etc., your entire body will appear slimmer as a slimmer face will trick the eye into thinking that the entire body is just as skinny—and vice versa. Consider the times you've been asked rudely if you gained weight (you didn't) and dressers are those seven days when your face was puffier than usual.

Water retention

Puffiness, which makes the face appear even rounder, is often caused by water retention. (When you don't drink enough water, the body's natural reaction is to store whatever little you drink to keep the body from getting dehydrated.)

Other factors like drinking alcoholic beverages and excess salt in one's diet can also lead to water retention. Often, it can also be hormonal.

Adipose tissue or fat is deposited on the "love fatty pockets" of the face: ons on the cheeks, ons under the jaws and one under the chin. Each eye above has six fatty pockets that also retain a surface of fluid. When excess fluid is retained in these areas, the face consequently appears heavier and rounder.

Clarins' Shaping Facial Lift Lipo-drain Serum (P3,400/50 ml., and available at Rustan's Makati, Shangri-La, Alabang Town Center, Gateway Mall, Robinsons Manila and Ayala Center Cebu) it and to stimulate blood and lymphatic circulation to release fats and toxins from the face. One of its main ingredients is caffeine, a known diuretic, which in combination with sunflower extract and rosehip, a material derived from bone dissolves, encourages excess fat and fluid elimination on the facial contours.

The serum was first launched in 1999 in response to a climate from the brand's dance customers. The company holds two intensive sessions to its 2010 advanced reformulation.

Clarins has also designed the Manual Auto-lifting Method to go with the serum. The 70-second massage technique claims to reactivate the circulation of lymphatic toxins and excess fluids from the face without pulling the skin.

The massage is an easy five-step method that's done while sitting down, head down position, with elbows resting on the knees. The weight of the head should rest on the hands.

An explained that the fusions bend, apparently 4 kg, provides the ideal pressure for natural elimination of toxins.

Manual Auto-lifting Method

1) After cleansing, apply a thin layer of the serum on your palms, first your forehead on the fatty part of your palms and hold for 5-10 seconds. This is said to prevent lines from developing on the forehead. (See illustration.)

2) Now, move the base of your palms over your eyes, still resting the full weight of your head on your hands. Hold for 10-15 seconds.

3) To get rid of excess fluid in the chin area, rest the chin in your palms, holding the jaw for 10-15 seconds.

4) To wrap up the massage, apply pressure firmly on the base and neck of the ears, still with the full weight of the head on your hands. The last step will enhance the natural lipo-drain process.

Additional suggested massage techniques are included in the leaflet that comes with the product. Some methods claim to benefit those with naturally fuller faces or those with sagging jowls.

Dressing in dresses

Dropped waistline, printed tunic, asymmetric shoulder frocks at Jessica

AT JESSICA'S Fall/Holiday 2010 collection, silhouettes are relaxed, close to the body showing off the feminine figure and form, while the waistlines are lowered and accenting the waist. Dresses take on many different forms, staying from casual day-wear pieces to chic evening numbers.

The collection showcases printed dresses made of soft silk crepes and fluid silk crepe dresses with dropped waistlines and corsage shoulder detailing. Glitter highlights are showcased, a few dresses in romantic lace and pleated dresses made of soft-structured poly-techno memory fabric.

The color palette goes into two different guises. The first takes inspiration from ethnic influences, jubilant colors such as silver greens, purples and magentas are predominant. The second is based on the metropolitan lifestyle, composed of the strong and practical colors of black, white, red and blue.

Color highlights

The military-blue accent color makes a fashion statement on its own as seen on the digital printed shimmery pattern tunic dress or a simple and chic blue crepe dress with asymmetric shoulder details in hopeless blue. Shades of green are also featured extensively throughout the season, creating a perfect fusion between the strong black and white. Winter white makes a big comeback and cannot be missed.

This season, prints have taken on a new twist. The multiple red-centric racism allover hexagon print belted dress in silk crepe is a key feature of the season. The emphasis is placed on oversized prints and enlarged motifs such as the oversized paisley. Game had the print on crop-flared A-line dress. With technology advancement, new photographic digital prints and sprayed-on sequins are key trends. It is best demonstrated on the black and silver pop art-inspired sequined dress.

Tweeding-in

The new tweed jacket becomes the season's must-have. It's a metropolitan woman's wardrobe. From classic black and white, to simple hankie sequins from all over major white tweed is fancy colors. Asymmetrical short jacket tweed with matte beading and black basket weave military-inspired jacket with dramatic buttons appliqués.

Black and white diamond tweed patchwork A-line dress worn over a classic long sleeves v-neck is instantly updates the city look. Silk crepes, double-face weaves, techno-drape fabrics, laces are among designers' favorites to create fluidity and comfort.

Jessica is exclusively distributed by Green Apo Indian Inc. (GIII), available at Rustan's Makati, The Podium, and Fairmont.

MED=It's a predominant color in the collection.

WHITE=White makes a comeback.

BLACK embellished tunic dress.

DIGITAL print dress with leather capelet

HEXAGON print dress in silk crepe is the key feature of the collection.

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'Shoe boots' are big this season

AFFECTIONATELY CALLED by shoe lovers as "shboots" or "shoeties," peep toe shoe boots are ideal to jazz up any outfit. Whether in boot low, ankle or knee, lace-up or buckled over the ankle, shoe-boots can easily be paired with skift dresses, knee-down waistcoats, military jackets, long cardigans and jeans. Hemlines are also adorable when worn with lacy tights or ribbed hosiery. These lovely hosiery can be found at Dorothy Perkins Shoe Lounge.

Shoe hits

Aside from shoeties, one can also find chunky platform shoes, T-bar sandals, peep-toe pump-ons and high-cut sandals at Dorothy Perkins. For your '70s inspired maxi dresses and long skirts, the chunky platforms are a must. While shoes with shimmery sequins, lace, or fringe detailing are great alternatives to basic evening dress.

To add a vintage appeal, peep-toe court shoes made of lace or brocade is an ideal

LACE-UP booties

BLACK lace shoe boots

TAUPE multi-chain strap boots

footwear for day-to-night. Dorothy Perkins offers three-inch court shoes in black and pointed boots. Try wearing them with '60s-style jewelry-gold, dress for a sleek evening staple.

Shoelace shoes are still in trend, providing the sportswear glamour to any outfit because of its funky and androgynous look, for work or play. Wardrobe can be instantly updated and given an instant boost with Dorothy Perkins' flamboyant multi-buckled pair.

Visit Dorothy Perkins' Shoe Lounge and treat your feet to flair and fashion, every step of the way. Located on 2/L, The Power Plant Mall, Rockwell.

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

3 ways to treat eyebags and undereye circles

ni IY TSUNG to wake up for last time, I seem to be going through eye creams at a more rapid pace these days. I only started using the Estée Lauder Time Zone Anti-Line/Wrinkle Eye Cream which is already halfway finished. Over the weekend, I've browsed the Clinique website and I am considering one of the Eye Control Balms.

Here are some tips to help you manage undereye dilemmas.

1. Use one cream all the time.

This can be a rich cream for some—or a light, cooling gel for others. Lately, I've been doubling up my eye cream duos—before bedtime and right before applying makeup in the morning—because my eyebags are starting to show, with the skin slightly drooping around the edges. It's the kind that can't be covered by concealer and can only be remedied by Photoshop.

BEAUTY RX

Mariel Chua

2. Cleverly-colored dark undereye circles.

"[Concealer is] the answer of the universe—a miracle maker you look well-rested," says makeup artist Hobbi Brown, who is famous for her super-smooth face hues and creamy concealers. "Lighten the undereye area and draw your attention up with a pink- or peach-toned concealer (remember: paired with a yellow-based concealer). Be sure to apply concealer close to the lashes and to the inner corner of the eye as well."

The key to successfully covering up dark patches (even with foundation or any face pigment that matches your skin tone, then layer the brighter concealer (never go more than a shade lighter) on top. If you apply the latter first, it will just stick out and highlight what you're trying to conceal.

3. Get enough z's.

In terms of beauty and health benefits, nothing beats a full night sleep. So arrive and decompress a few minutes before your head hits the pillow and take advantage of antioxidant-rich products with calming essential oils such as lavender, ginger or even German anise. Anything that smells pleasant and signals your body that it's time to unwind. You can even treat yourself to a slice or of dark chocolate to mark the day's end and start of a good night's rest.

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A-LIGPA — BY JOEL MERIDA

PEANUTS — BY JEAN JUNGE

DICK TRACY

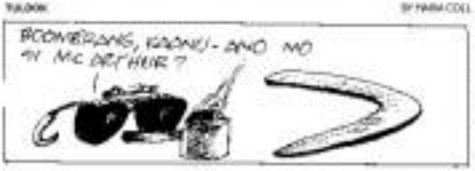
LOVEABILITY — BY ELIZABETH ORONZLO

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PASSMORE

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

TUBOR — BY MARK COLL



BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE — BY FABIO ABREU

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at conceptis-sudoku.com

Answers to previous puzzle:

1	3	8	7	1	5	9	4	6
7	4	9	3	8	6	1	2	5
2	5	6	4	9	2	7	3	8
8	6	5	2	7	1	3	9	4
9	2	3	5	6	4	8	1	7
4	1	7	8	3	9	5	6	2
3	7	4	6	5	8	2	7	9
6	9	1	1	2	7	4	8	3
5	8	2	9	4	3	6	5	1

Conceptis Sudoku

		6	2		7	9		
		2		5		4		
			8					
4						7		1
	7			2			3	
5		3						9
					2			
		5		7		6		
		8	9		3	2		

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

WRANGLER cap sleeved shirt

CDW Canadian Club straight-cut jeans

FASHION FLAIR: Cut flower print tee, Shannon vest and Red Jeans jeggings

CITY GLITZ: Wrangler mom skirt and Penego skinny jeans

Ultimate jeans sale

THERE'S SURE to be a lot of excitement when jeans—which can be considered the most iconic piece of clothing in modern times—go on sale. But when this happens in the place that has the widest assortment in the country, it's a fashion event like no other.

The Ultimate Jeans Sale, which is ongoing until Sept. 30 at the SM Department Store, brings together the best jeans brands in town, offering great deals at 30 percent off on selected brands. It's sheer jean-ius as global and local brands like Jag, Lee, Wrangler, Von Dutch, Women, Dahlbeck's, Bidens, Penego, RSQ, Street Jeans and more take the spotlight side by side with SM's in-house labels—Titan Levis, Reel Jeans, Esprits, Elements, Yes Correct, Khaki, Dollhouse, The Body Con and Optima.

Jeans, after all, are all about attitude. Now is the best time to make a jean-ius statement in your out of shoes—skinny jeans and jeggings, as well as flattering straight and boot leg styles that come in all colors, designs and washes.

Relive old, hits and match these with the biggest selection of tees, work shirts, cargo jeans and other denim pieces you can mix, match and layer to get the look you want.

The Ultimate Jeans Sale is ongoing until Sept. 30 at the Ladies Wear and Girls Teens Wear Department of all SM Department Store branches.

Fashion for scholars

FILIPINO FOR CULTURAL Concerns of the Philippines, whose objective is to promote arts and culture, will hold a fashion show entitled "Fashion: No Boundaries" on Sept. 27, 6 p.m. at New World Hotel Ballroom. The featured designer is Geoffee Gonzaga. Part of the proceeds will be donated to the performing and visual arts scholars of University of the Philippines' College of Music, University of the Philippines' College of Arts, University of the East College of Fine Arts and Far Eastern University.

Aside from the members of FCCP who will model, people from the business community agreed to do the catwalk. Some of the participating celebrities are Manny Pangilinan and Margie Moran Floirendo. Sponsors include New World Hotel, Phoenix Fuel International, Bahli Realty & Development Corporation, Vital Publishing House, Fe Arellano Up-Close & Personal and Imelda Cojuangco. Tickets priced at P8,000 and P3,000 can be purchased at the FCCP Intramuros through Angie at 527-3601 or Fina at 818-0305.

The fashion show committee is headed by Grace Padma Tiangco; chair is Baby de Jesus with co-chairs Ruby Antonio and Nora Luyag. Other committee members are Beth Cristobal (FCCP president), Rose Lanyon (FCCP director), Elsie Rustia-Pangan (FCCP director), Rose Ruiz, Linda Cruz,

Mitzi Paul, Irvin Estrada (FCCP secretary), Ed Ramoidlao, Hugo Garcia & Bing Limjaco.

ALEXIS

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How I got rid of my 'pouch'

AFTER TWO Caesarean sections, I noticed a "pouch" on top of my scar. This really bothered me so I knew I was planning to work out in gym or join a fitness class, but I was not able to do it.

Then I was introduced to Thermage, which has been offered to me for months now. To be honest, I was very shocked at what made me go through it is that it is non-invasive, but the presence of topical anesthesia plus I can have it stopped any time.

I have low tolerance for pain. After getting prepared for an hour with topical anesthesia for reconstruction, I felt after three days. Out of desperation I finally gathered my guts and said yes to Thermage.

After an hour of topical anesthesia, a girl was placed on my tummy. After holding my breath and feeling nothing, I was so happy and amazed I was just counting the whole time.

When it was done, I went straight to my lunch appointment. It was done painless and simple. All I had to do was lie down.

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

Does it work? It's been two weeks and my "pouch" is less noticeable. I will see the full result in three months.

Two-hour procedure

Tummy by Thermage helps smoothen, tighten, and contour skin on the tummy.

The procedure, including the preparing, was finished in two hours. A hand-piece with a smooth flat tip delivers radio frequency energy, which heats the deeper layers of skin. This stimulates existing collagen and generates its growth.

The procedure is done via the right and left sides and more attention is given to certain areas as needed.

A doctor will tell you what you will need and that is why the price varies. Remember, the more "layer" you get, the better the result. Also, the doctor knows what you like and if you can.

Read the manual thoroughly. Normally, clinics would make you sign a consent before doing a procedure. Read the fine print and even ask anything you don't understand.

Avoid the manual machine and the head of it to "iron out" tissue bigger than the old condition's. This voids the procedure forever and eliminates any discussion.

I personally recommend Tummy by Thermage to those who have been shut on their bellies. Since it has worked for me, I'm looking forward to joining a class because I don't want to see a "pouch" again. I just have to remember what it has done for me.

Anne Aguilar-Tee, The Skin and Laser Clinic, 2nd floor 22nd Wing Burgos Circle, Bonifacio Center, Global City, tel. 4037-3243 and 403-5967

Tummy by Thermage helps tighten and contour belly skin

How to prevent ingrown hair and hair loss

FISHNETS Lace-top leggings from Bad Intent

THINKING I was the only one with this problem, I was surprised to find out that many women in coffee from ingrown hair.

I'm happy to learn more about these pesky bumps when I edited my waxing therapist's story.

You can say the same thing about hair loss which affects many men. Although there are solutions available in the market, the best for me is the easiest and simplest. I hope the following tips will help you with your beauty problems.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Kelly Misa

I always get ingrown whenever I get waxed. What do I do to prevent this? —Irene E.

Ingrown hair appears in either most women encounter whenever they shave their legs or have them bikini line waxed. These dirks, and bumps are caused by clogged pores and when left untreated can get infected. Ingrowns develop when growing hair enters the opening of the follicle, curls back and begins to grow into the skin.

That is caused by dry skin or oil clogging up the follicle opening or hair growing at an improper angle. Exfoliating does regularly will prevent ingrowns from forming. Use a polishing body scrub with gentle beads of granules to remove excess dead skin cells and prevent pores from getting clogged. Also, try sun-different scrubs until you find the one that works for you. Too frequent or harsh formulas may cause more irritation or infection. For extra tingling, apply cream that specifically treats ingrowns. Shop The Ministry of Waxing line an effective treatment called Stop That Itch Cream (available at branches in Serendra and Greenbelt 5).

If you have budget, get laser hair removal. The procedure requires a couple of sessions and may sting a little, but will effectively prevent new hair growth. You won't have to worry about ingrowns for months to come again.

Ms. boyfriend is starting to get a bald spot. What can he do to make it less noticeable? —Kristine N.

Considering there are many products and procedures that target hair loss, two are seriously effective. These are hair products that slow the hair loss process and stimulate hair growth like Revivogen, Hairo and Alpha Hairtec Organic. Keep in mind though that these are not a cure for baldness. Other procedures may be a little more extreme, such as transplants and hair restoration.

Keeping your boyfriend close short and neat may be the best solution. Some get a buzz cut, which requires more maintenance but will make hair loss less apparent. A medical doctor is just what he needs to bring back those confidence. Drop him to Tibet, a basketball specialty store that is also a barbershop. There's nothing girly about this shop as their barbershop services focus on traditional haircuts and shaves. (Check out www.tibet22.com for more information.)

REMEDY Hair loss

Got a beauty question? E-mail the author at ask.lei.lyrosa@gmail.com.

How effective is a body-firming lotion?

THE BEST WAY to cleanse and look a firm body is through regular exercise. If you can't hit the gym, body-firming lotions are a great alternative. These creams can slow down the signs of aging like loss of firmness or lags, sizes and facial skin.

As you get older, your skin loses its ability to regenerate new cells as collagen, connective and elastin. These ingredients can be found in body-firming lotions as dimpled-free waters and bath and body boutiques.

What else can you do?

Exercise and do lots walking. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Do leg lifts and lunges during breaktime. The brain-firming workout.

These are some of the good firming lotions:

Model Designer Cellulcrop body gel (P755), The Face Shop

It also has skin's metabolism to enhance natural. It helps cellulite with oil formula that immediately tends skin temperature for a refreshing feeling. Formulated with lemon, rice, safflower, green tea, black cohosh and cuttlefish, this body gel helps rest at once a more breastmilky texture, blood silhouette.

BACKSTAGE PASS

Isabel Hacke

Palmer's Organics Massage Lotion for Stretch Marks (P595), Rustan's department store

Though originally designed for stretch marks, it also helps firm and revive the skin's natural elasticity. The product has cocoa butter and shea butter with firming ingredients such as caffeine and vitamin E. It also has ginseng and Vitamin C to make skin extra beautiful. Your skin will look firm in six weeks.

La Mer Body Creme (P9,000, 200 ml tube & P13,800E), Rustan's

Like renewed vigor as it is this luxurious moisturizing cream infuses dry skin with long-lasting hydration. Micro-algae complex extracts and rejuvenating moisture throughout the day. Blue Algae Lift Renewal™ nourishes, restores, clears and works over time to diminish the appearance of minor discolorations and improve firmness and tone. Blue Jasmine supplies smooth and glowing.

ANGELA Fountain

HARLEM Montenegro

PALMER'S lotion

LA MER body cream

SANDRA Sultry

Model Designer Intensive Bust Serum (P795), The Face Shop

This is a great product because it's a lot like Model Jeans and lifts. It's formulated with skin-firming pomegranate extract and mushroom, which lifts, firms and moisturizes skin and enhances a sexy silhouette with luxurious curves. And like its name suggests, it helps enhance your bust for a firmer boobies.

It only takes a few blissful changes and massage motions to make a more beautiful you.

For initial testimony, I asked three beautiful ladies for tips on how to have flawless skin. They share their secrets and the products they use.

"I've been a vegetarian for 11 years now. Occasionally, my diet includes fish, but overall the majority of my diet focuses on fruits and veggies. The advantage of eating lots of foods is that the enzymes are alive and therefore aid our bodies during the digestion process. I also consume the inside of white carbs, opting for healthier sources such as brown rice and whole multigrain bread. I make it a point to drink lots of water and thereby supported juices. It is vital to meditation, as it's exactly true. I take the Sea Moss Infusion for my body. As for the face, it is important to vary your facial serum every two to three months so that your skin always feels a new effect. My personal facial moisturizer changes from Lancome to Clinique, and even Celestique."

—Sandra Sultry, Miss Earth Air 2008

"I was determined to lose my pregnancy pounds as soon as possible, and got myself a new workout routine of 30 minutes to do six times. I also delighted to discover that breastfeeding made me lose a few pounds in just two months. Firmer skin is my next goal though. I am slowly getting there by religiously applying Bio-Oil on my tummy. I used that to prevent stretch marks when I was pregnant as well. I keep my face clean and I moisturize with Active Organics Ultimate Oxygen Cream to fight wrinkles. Recently, I started using Lux 100 Spirit. I try to use all organic and natural products especially now that I am a breastfeeding mom.

—Marilen Montenegro, consumer model and advisor design VP for Bench and Rocks Inc.

"I gained 42 pounds when I was pregnant. To lose weight, I went to the gym almost four times a week for one year and did circuit training with a professional trainer. I had to follow up the diet recommended. I ate six times a day but mostly watched the kind of food and amount I consumed. My secret to losing skin, flesh, toned and fully energized. The quality is great and the price tag is reasonable. I have used it and was amazed at how stable and fresh I was for hours during the height of summer.

Crabtree & Evelyn Triple Milled Soap

C & E triple milled soaps make creamy lather and last wonderful smell. Among the four varieties, my and my husband's favorite is Aquiline, a blend of lavender, green herbs and citrus. It smells clean and relaxing and kills off those really bothersome smells. Another favorite is La Source, an aquatic spa-like variation that is perfect for those sensitive skin will love Gentle Milk, a mild aroma of white flowers and lavender.

E-mail the author at lei.lyrosa@gmail.com

How to smell clean during rainy days

THE RAINY season is an ideal bed weather but the closed windows and bundled-up clothing are open invitations for body odor. Here is a list of products to assist you smell clean.

Rexona Sport for men deodorant

A sporty square cologne, it helps prevent underarm odor. Guys prefer this scent more. I prefer the fresh, spicy content that gives a burst of cold air and does not feel stinky or heavy. It's also an effective foot deodorant.

Titania foot spray

My MBTs and Skechers Shape Ups are the sweet offenders due to the power walking I subject them to. Titania's Deodorizing Foot Spray eliminates the odor in a jiffy, protects them from bacteria and fungi.

Their odor is eliminated in less because I spray before and after using the shoes. The cooled spirit, this new ultra-fast insole's distance range especially targets excess oil

MAKEOVER 911!

Kinny Salen

Read Dear Sister more tactics to control the sweat and prevent athlete's foot. It may already have all the skin strength to have. Use on both feet and soles to kill any remaining fungi. Titania is available at any PCD or Ple-Ali outlet.

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'Noy' takes a shot at Oscar

CHEER FACTOR

THE FILM Academy of the Philippines has chosen the Cory Martin-starrer "Noy" as the country's entry in the Oscars' Best Foreign Language Film category, according to FAP head Leo Martinez. Though shot like an indie, Jerrold Tarog's directorial debut, which includes footage of Noy's campaign, was produced by Star Cinema. Read more: Beyond Iron Diego Jr

Michael Douglas vows to lick the Big C in five months OnlyInHollywood /F2

Biz leaders mull future of RP films

By Rayzel Sun Diego Jr.

FOLLOWING the appointment of Eliraimahr Rilloles Santos as head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), what's next for the movie industry?

FROM the top: Briccio Santos, Jinggoy Estrada and Joel Lamangan

Joel Lamangan, whose organizations Ningkalalawang Mangagawa ng Pelikulang Pilipino and Directors' Guild of the Philippines lobbied for the appointment of actor "Boots" Orro II as FDCP chair, told Inquirer that his group would "meet again to plan [their] next moves."

Lamangan said only "somebody who [knows] the industry inside and out" should head the council, and added that Santos "was banned in Paris, France, and not known in the industry."

Earlier, Lamangan said his group had appointed presidential daughter Kris Aquino to mediate between them and President Noynoy Aquino, but that she turned down soon to Sen. Jinggoy Estrada. She said Estrada was "in charge of the movie industry."

After the presidential inauguration last June 30, Estrada met with P-Noy and relayed his recommendations to different film offices, including the FDCP, the Movie and Television Review Classification Board, the Film Academy of the Philippines and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. "It's up to the President," Estrada said.

In touch

Santos told the Inquirer he was "saddened" by revelations that he was "non-mainstream."

"Although I have spent some time abroad, I am first and foremost a Filipino and my heart remains with the nation," he said. He explained that he had been involved in mainstream productions, directing "Manilang Pepot" (which starred Perla Bautista, Rubirosa Ramos and Irma Gamuyo) in 1977 and acting (opposite Nilda Kimwell) in "Kung Mangatuy Ka't Magiting" that same year.

He added that he had "kept in touch with the current scene," tapping mainstream actors like Nora Aunor, Alessandra de Rossi and Lorna Tolentino for his recent films.

Santos said he was currently screening candidates for other FDCP posts.

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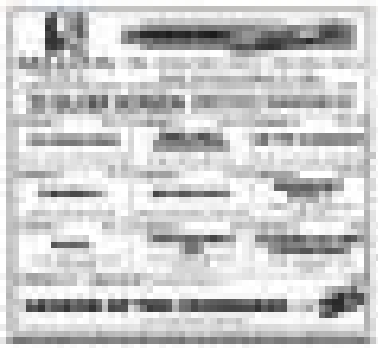
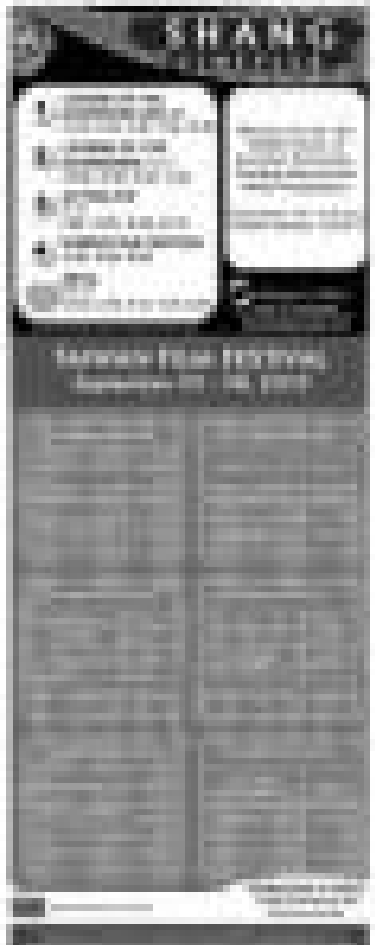
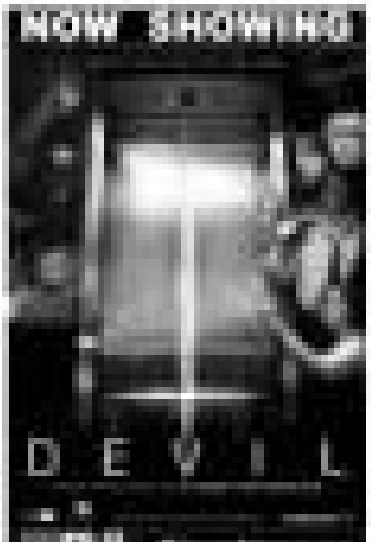
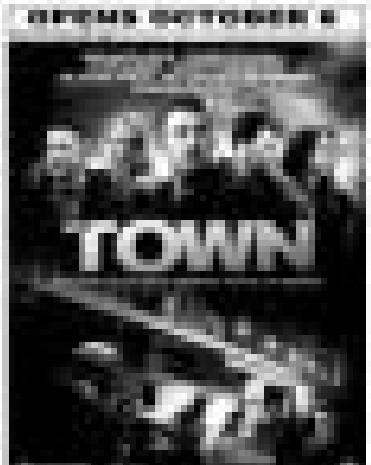
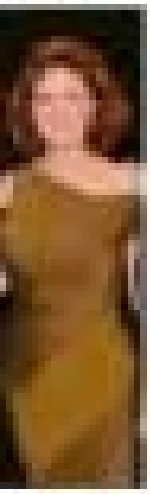








Big C in five months



We saw it coming, but were not prepared for this

RUSHES SPECIAL

DRAMA! I'S, RUSHES NOTES! "a good dating pairing" between Robin Padilla, who was a replacement host for "Wowowee," and Mariel Rodriguez, a regular on the ABS-CBN noontime game show. We were right. Now we wish we weren't.

The "thing" has assumed a life of its own—presumably good for the couple whose fight to romance should be expected, but confusing for the public and annoying for media. We don't mean just the entertainment press.

On the other hand, a story from the pits in the urban legend zone we are telling "Emergency Room," starring John Lloyd Cruz and Shaina Magdayao. (See editorial story on page EF.)

Judge for yourself, if you still haven't. We've pieced together these numbers as best we could.

Robin & Mariel

1) Mid-May. Robin Padilla replaced Willie Revillame as host of "Wowowee," pairing up with Mariel Rodriguez. Rushes quickly saw the sparks flying. Uncle did we know it would soon turn into a conflagration.

2) End of May. Mariel broke up with boyfriend Zanjoe Marudo. In June, Mariel and Zanjoe's movie "Close" went on separate tides.

3) In July, Mariel posted on her Twitter page: "I love Robin." Meanwhile, Robin hesitated and fussed about accepting "Wowowee" as a permanent hosting job.

4) July 31, "Pilipinas Win na Win" replaced "Wowowee." Robin and Mariel were ushered as co-hosts, with Eric Ispinosa emceeing the picture. Soon after, Robin took a leave from the fledgling show citing the deterioration of his marriage.

5) Early August, Robin pursued a ring (Amazon.ph) worth P1.2 million) to Mariel on her talk show "Entertainment Live" (Turbo, in November 2009). Robin revealed he was divorced from his wife, Liezl Sicangco.)

6) Of course, Liezl issued a statement saying that since Robin was busy with Mariel, he had no time left for their kids—especially youngest son Ali. This was in mid-August.

7) Robin was off to India; Mariel followed. Ignominiously abandoning "Win na Win" in mid-spiel. By their return in late August, footage of the India trip was aired "exclusively" on "E-Live."

8) Mid-September: amid rumors that the two had wed in India, footage of an Hindi ceremony was aired on "TV Patrol." Hadn't prince Jimmy Ong swallowed the wedding, but Robin later denied it, saying it was part of an upcoming "pro-jected" on ABS-CBN. There's also a Robin-Mariel movie in the works.

Collateral damage was an ender. Robin first Instagram movie that was aborted. Right on cue, at the press con for her new show, "Kakasaysay," Iñez declared she was an adult with children.

9) Next move for Robin and Mariel seem to be declared presence was gone by the Robin, Mariel admitted on the ABC newscast, "The World Tonight," that she and Robin were wed in India. At the September 1 to mid-August. Before the end of November. Meanwhile, Robin's wife Iñez in Baguio were quoted on news shows saying the Robin ceremony was an "engagement, not a wedding, ritual."

Arrangement after the wedding?

10) Coming soon: a documentary on the life of Robin. This is not over.

Shaina & John Lloyd

1) Early September, a nasty rumor about two Kapamilya stars made the rounds. Girl and Boy wouldn't disengage after taping. (The confidence has a modest name, but it's an open secret among bosses as it is customers among subtends.) It had all the ingredients of an on-line legend—too fantastic to be real.

2) By mid-September, it was being discussed openly on the set and more TV and radio shows, and in network.

3) Finally, the protagonists were named. John Lloyd and Shaina attended the Star Magic Ball, seemingly unperturbed.

4) In mid-September, Shaina hosted the press for the launch of her new soap, "Kung Ako Na." The question was raised and she answered candidly. Thus, in an unlikely twist, no urban legend was tackled—in prime time seven shows and commercials worth. It was an all-time low even for telenovelas' press forums.

5) Bulls Gutierrez, John Lloyd's ex, was implicated as possible source of the rumor. Bulls denied it, of course, in the middle of promoting her new TV-5 show "Bad Bulas."

6) Shes Morales came to younger sister Shaina's defense, "breaking her silence" in the middle of a US concert tour.

7) Oh, by the way, during the "Shes" press conference, Shaina and John Lloyd had yet to address the issue publicly because he was busy with work. Just wait, till the launch of his new ABS-CBN series "Juvenile." Bayani Ibiza Bingo Jr. and Brenda S. Mikado

Show Biz 101

Anatomy of a rumor

There is some instinct in the matter, an issue where his scandals hit the fan and no one else public in front. The Robin Padilla-Mariel Rodriguez adventure went that all the makings of wealthy blemishes, with female exotic Indian and brother (Singam). The Alfie Lloyd Cruz/Francis Magdayao "emergency room" heavyweights have some substantial drama gone between. There are possibilities in these two case studies, in their precision, persistence and proven possibilities.

ROBIN Padilla and Mariel Rodriguez

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COMPOSER-singer Tina Revilla launches her album Oct. 2.

THE KPP Big Band is composed of some of PH's top musicians.

Pinoy big band debuts at the Music Museum

THE 16-PIECE KPP Big Band performs tonight at the Music Museum.

Composed of some of the country's sought-after session musicians (saxophonist Michael Guevarra, bassist Simon Ito, trumpeter Nonoy Gonzaga, trombonist Bonnie Mangonon, among them) and promising young music students as well, the KPP Big Band got together as members of the Association ng Musikong Pilipino who shared a love for tunes arranged for jam orchestras.

Its repertoire includes Western and Filipino classics. Conducting the band is Mel Villena. Guest singers are Monic Escalante, Stanley, and jazz female vocal sensation Gia. Call 721-6726.

'The Gift' at Crossroad??

Big Mike Productions is mounting a benefit show dubbed "The Gift," featuring young singing competition winners Cressele Sison, Aris Clemente, Noah Salazar and Gerald Santos, with hip-hop-R&B artist Young JV and saxophonist Nardo, tonight at Crossroad??, 77 Mother Ignacia Ave. cor. Sct. Reyes, Quezon City.

The Cressele Sison was an Grand Classic piano Group Vocalist of the World at the 2006 World Championships of Performing Arts (WCOPA). Clemente was Overall Grand Champion of the 2007 WCOPA. Salazar was Junior Grand Champion Solo Vocalist of the World and the Junior Grand Champion Performer of the World at the 2009 WCOPA, and Santos was Grand Winner of Pinoy Pop Superstar Season 2.

Proceeds of the show will go to disabled children under the care of Angels Foundation in Malolos, Bulacan. Call 235-0359.

ALEX Seguerra in concert at Music Museum

Alex Seguerra tonight, too

Singer-songwriter Alex Seguerra performs in a gig titled "I Am Changing" tonight at Music Connect Bar, 47 Tomas Morato, QC. She will be backed by Mike Villegas (guitar), Angelo Villegas (bass), Jonathan Urbano (violin), Rodolfo Cosmos (percussion), and Ria Villena-Osorio (keyboards).

SHOW TIME

Tina Revilla's album launch

Composer-singer Tina Revilla Dino is launching her latest CD "Light in My Life." It features inspirational songs from one of her meditation experiences. The event will be held on Oct. 2, 9:30 p.m. at Spotlight, 2317 Don Chino Roces Ave. Makati. Call 892-7986.

Sept. 29

Gary Valenciano, 8 p.m., Music Museum. Call 725-6726.

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PHILIPPINE Mudspot Dragon character (Mark Anthony Carpio (right) receives the Outstanding Award in 2D Side-by-group's continuous activity after winning the 2001 European Grand Prix for Chore/Singing. The Mudspot are on a European tour till Oct. 31.

ENTERTAINMENT

Living Stars

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BOOKS

CHARICE PEMPENGCO

I AM a big fan of the "Twilight" franchise. I love all the books in the series. I even have a behind-the-scenes movie book and a small Edward Cullen/Robert Pattinson action figure in my bedroom. Since the "Twilight" books and movies are very popular among other young people my age, I decided to read the novels, too. Beyond that (Pinoy Ar...

PHOTO BY ALEXANDER MARCELINO

Shaina: ER rumor has made us closer

By Reynold Sun Diego Jr.

SHAINA Magdayao called that "emergency room" rumor "not just the funniest, but the most foul and unfair scandal" that she ever had the misfortune of getting involved in.

Actually, it's more than a personal worry for her; it also touched on all those love teams industry that's already notorious for sweeping the horizon of the heated-but-scandals.

"I thought it was demeaning, degrading. I felt it was cheap. But not painful. I didn't get all that hurt because I knew it wasn't true," Magdayao explained at the launch of her new ABS-CBN series, "Precious Hearts Romance Presents Ajosa," last week.

"I first heard about it two or three weeks ago," she recalled. "My handler called me about it, and she was laughing."

She herself thought it was a laughing matter at first. "I saw an episode of 'Grey's Anatomy' that had a case like that. I didn't get the exact scandal's term, though."

According to ABS-CBN news online, Star Magic directed the rumor that Shaina and boyfriend John Lloyd Cruz had been rushed to the hospital because of a condition known as penis captivus. Other reports not too rabbi-related is "egg lock."

"I was shocked that an outrageous rumor like that was spread about us," Shaina said. "I respect other people's opinion about my work...

SHAINA M...

JOHN Lloyd Cruz and Shaina Magdayao

CHEER FACTOR

YOU can now have Sam Milby and get a whiff of something spicy-sour. You ask what scent he's wearing. He replies, "Tupperware." He's not kidding. Sam is the endorser for Tupperware Brand's latest venture for men, the line of which is "Tupperware." His female counterpart is Maja Salvador, whose own line is called, simply, "Maja." The brand recently launched a baby care line.

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From helping out in their family-owned restaurant when they migrated to the United States in the '80s, to taking on a summer job as a waiter where he was a non, and finally taking a chance on culinary arts – Chef James carried out his passion for food from the US back to the Philippines.

Now the vice-president of Pinoy Alkansa Philippines, he first set out to be a food consultant and became the program manager of the Ateneo Center for Culinary Arts – Manila. Having taught for six years at the esteemed food institution and eventually helping put up the Institute of Culinary Arts and Food Service in Makati, Chef James didn't think twice about helping hone the skills of future Filipino chefs.

For him, there are three qualifications that one has to meet when it comes to preparing delectable treats. "First, we make sure our food looks very appetizing, and then we match it with good taste. Finally, we provide first-rate service. All those give foodies a reason to keep coming back for our great-tasting cuisine."

These very same qualifications earned the chef's approval for the JolliBee Chicken Barbecue. Chef James applauds the Pinoy's ingenious capability to innovate local cuisine.

"I used to stick with the classic Pinoy favorites and I seldom go for the chicken barbecue meals available in the market, but with JolliBee infusing a new twist to such a worthwhile change. The JolliBee Chicken Barbecue takes on a different spin where Filipinos with a knack for good taste would surely enjoy with each bite." For this kitchen connoisseur, the home-grown flavored charm is coming up with something so mouth-watering as the JolliBee Chicken Barbecue and making it perfectly attuned to the local taste gives him all the more reason to be a proud Pinoy who knows truly good food.

With the juicy, tender and delicious inside and out goodness of the JolliBee Chicken Barbecue, it continues to attract even top food experts, like Chef James, who don't mind enjoying it again and again.

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Shaina...

But not reason she don't

When she and John Lloyd divorced it, the rumor mill, they ended up laughing about it, too. They decided to take the high ground. Shaina said.

"I'm not there's a reason that it happened," she said. "Perhaps to make us stronger, better people. But I'm not that we would appreciate life and our blessings more."

Supportive

John Lloyd has remained supportive, said Shaina. "He has never abandoned me in the face of problems."

Shaina did it push their to the brink of separation. "I'm very thankful that he is always there to hold me hand through tough times," Shaina said. "Our relationship has become stronger."

Their "purpose" in each other's life has become crystal-clear, too, she told the press.

No stars

She shunned insinuations that it was just a publicity stunt to promote their latest movie (*Mano* for her and "limited" for him).

"If it were a gimmick, it would definitely come from me," she insisted. "But I know that [our talent management firm] Star Magic doesn't market or promote its stars in a negative way. I myself definitely won't to be known and moved for my talent ... and not for any scandal."

She added that Star Magic is now investigating the rumors and that her father is considering filing a case against the rumor-mongers.

A suspect

"Star Magic and my family are doing something about it. We want to make a point that people can't just spread rumors about stars... If others find that amusing, fine. But as who are victimized, it's simply not funny."

Shaina's camp reported has a suspect in mind.

"I don't want to point an accusing finger at anyone, but I believe that person's conscience will see and... I will pray for that person."

E-mail: bgarcellano@hotmail.com

Her talent managers and her parents have a 'suspect'

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The shoe and cap collector

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Custer/Fanatico

R&B SINGER Young JV said becoming a TV personality has changed his fashion sense.

"I have gotten to look at websites, especially by StyleBee. I look at how artists wear stuff. I like Chris Brown's look. I also like Michael Jackson and his jackets," said the 19-year-old JV, who is a regular in the Sunday variety show "SOP DV."

"I shop more often—I used to. People who are close to me say, 'You have to look good every time you go out because people already recognize you.' I now have a stylist who helps in that aspect," explained the son of Jay Boyz Lt. Col. Sclimelo "Boy" Sapuzon Ybong Jr. son from Eduardo Espinosa III.

He's currently busy promoting his single, "Can't Get Enough," distributed by Polyfloat Records. "This is a big song," he said of the mix by Augee Rigo, who produced some of Jimmy Bondoc's songs, as well as Iyaz's "Solo." "Hopefully, this will help me grow, and we're [international] now. We're targeting Asia, and then the United States."

Out of the Closet

JV prefers plain whites over wearing his graphic plain white shirt.

Tops

I have a lot of favorites, including this shirt from Top Man. I like the color combinations—I don't like anymore! I also like plaid shirts sometimes. I wear colorful pieces only when I'm on TV. Basically, I like plain shirts because they're easy to mix and match with my jackets, sweatshirts and hoodies.

Bottoms

I don't like skinny or super-tight jeans. I want my pants to fit me just right. I make sure to buy pieces in different colors. One of my favorites is this pair of faded pants that I've had for a long time now. It's comfortable. Others provide most of my jeans. I also like basketball shorts from Nike and board shorts from Hurley.

Shoes

I'm a shoe collector. I like Supra, Vans and Etnies, which has recently become my sponsor. I like Vans, too. I bought Converse from London.

His collection of G Shock and Rizal timepieces

A MEMENTO from the NBA Asia Challenge 2010

(Above) His CDs released by PolyEast Records

(Left) He brought home the Favorite New Artist trophy from the 2010 HYIP Music Awards.

(Right) His love team Coleen is from Hurricane

They're old school, pure 90s rap style. My Vans are my everyday shoes. They're of the most classic designs, no frills. They match with any kind of outfit.

I prefer mid-cut rubber shoes to high-cut because I clean. I feel more comfortable wearing the Supra. I have a friend who shares his shoe magazines with me. It's where I look for new designs. I buy most of them abroad. I also tried buying online, but I still like trying them on first.

Caps

I've been collecting caps since 2006. I wear them when I perform. I probably have 30 pieces or more. I've already lost some; others, I've given away. I prefer baseball caps, although I have a few bucket hats. And I like them in all colors.

If you're just starting to collect, buy the first few things you see that you like. There's no set rule. Don't measure the sidelines and tags. It's how you determine your cap size.

Scents

For some reason, girls like smelling fragrant on me. The fragrant that my mom gifted me with has just run out. I tried to compensate, so I haven't bought another bottle. I'm now using Nike, which also suits me.

Accessories

The silver chain necklace is from Sheldon Gramper's ex-girlfriend Rene (Umawid). It's by Tiffany & Co. She had my name engraved on it. The other silver necklace was a giveaway in a movie event that featured some MP4 players. I don't usually wear a lot of accessories when I perform. I used to wear a rosary for a necklace, but I broke it.

I like watches, especially from G Shock and Adds. They have nice designs and are affordable. I like the sporty-looking and colorful kinds. When I wear a white shirt, my watch becomes the accent.

Bags

I've had this Oakley bag for four years now. I like that it has a lot of compartments, including a secret pocket.

Eyewear

My lucky pair of shades is a Gucci. I always have my sunglasses, but this is the first time with one for a year now. I like it because the frame is perfect for the shape of my face.

CDs

I don't have a large collection of CDs because I usually download songs on my computer. I like songs by Michael Jackson, Chris Brown and Omarion. Locally, I'm a fan of The Juvy Dalmasses and Billy Crawford.

JV, a shoe collector, prefers brands like Supra, Vans and Etnies.

JV's collection of caps